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The frontispiece to this volume, a portrait
of John Howard Payne as "Hamlet," has
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MEMOIRS

OF

JOHN HOWARD PAYNE,

THE AMERICAN ROSCIUS:

WITH

Criticisms on his Acting,

IN THE VARIOUS THEATRES OF

AMERICA,

ENGLAND AND IRELAND.

COMPILED FROM AUTHENTIC DOCUMENTS.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MILLER, 25, BOW-STREET,
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ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following pages present, perhaps, the only materials which have ever been collected in England for a correct estimate of the American Stage, as to be inferred from the encouragement of national talent, and the style of dramatic criticism in that recent and interesting country. Mr. Payne is, we believe, the only native American to whom they have ever given celebrity : their Drama, like their Literature, having almost exclusively been British.



MEMOIRS

OF

MR. JOHN HOWARD PAYNE.

BEFORE entering upon the present biography, we feel it our duty to confess the very important aid, for which we are indebted to a London publication of considerable respectability. The Editor of that work commences his notice with the following paragraph: "As our readers have a right to expect from our diligence, the earliest account of every interesting novelty that attracts the attention, and employs the conversation of the town, we have the pleasure to present them a short biographical sketch of this Trans-Atlantic stranger, the materials for which we have obtained from unquestionable authority." It has fortunately chanced for us, however, to meet with documents more minute, than any which seem to have fallen in the way of our predecessor in the task, and these we shall freely incorporate with his, offering proper acknowledgments in the

outset, in order to avert the imputation of taking to ourselves more credit than we deserve.

John Howard Payne is descended from a most ancient and respectable parentage in the city of New-York, where he was born, on the 9th of June, 1792, and was soon after, while yet an infant, removed with his family to Boston. The utmost care being taken of his education, he well rewarded the labour bestowed for the purpose of forming his heart and eliciting his genius, in affording the earliest indications of active goodness, and of great intellectual powers. When other boys of his age were playing at marbles, or flying kites, young Payne, by intense study, was storing the ample treasury of his mind with those supplies of knowledge, which enabled him, at the early age of twelve years, to support the conversation, and to perform the duties and transactions of maturity. The father of Mr. Payne was encumbered by a numerous, but very intellectual family, and, being far from affluent in his circumstances, destined only one of his sons to a liberal profession. This choice did not fall upon the subject of our memoir; in consequence of which, he was placed, at the age of thirteen, in the counting-house of a distinguished merchant in New-York. The ardent, aspiring mind of Master Payne, found in itself no congeniality with the objects of a sphere so

contracted as this was, when measured by the scale of his inquisitive disposition and extensive capacity. He secretly undertook, during his few leisure moments, the Editorship of a literary work, the novelty of whose style, with its elegance and erudition, speedily secured it a wide circulation and universal perusal in the United States. The author, however, with a modesty ever found in alliance with eminent talents and virtues, most cautiously concealed himself from notice, by the guards which anonymous moralists can adopt, until the persevering search of several conspicuous characters, who, admiring his writings, penetrated his retreat, and, very happily for himself and the world, afforded him an immediate passport to celebrity. The circumstance of his discovery as editor of this paper, was the great hinge upon which his future fortunes turned; and there is about this affair, such an air of romantic adventure, that we cannot resist the feeling by which we are impelled, to insert an extract from the *New-York Evening Post* of January 24th, 1806, relating the circumstances in a manner which confers the highest honour on the head and heart of the gentleman from whom it proceeded. “We do ourselves the pleasure to recommend to the public a little weekly paper, under the title of the *Thespian Mirror*, of which the Fourth Number has already ap-

peared. We believe we cannot do this more successfully, than by telling the following short and simple story, introductory of the Editor himself. The week succeeding the First Number, some remarks on its merits were sent to my paper by a correspondent, under the signature of *Criticus*, but there not being room for their insertion for several subsequent days, an apology was made, and a promise that they should appear the next evening. This, by mere chance, it seems, met the eye of the Editor of the Mirror, who immediately sent to my house the following *billet*, written in a beautiful hand, though evidently in haste. It is published just as I received it, without the alteration of a syllable. “ The Editor of the Thespian Mirror, having observed a note in the Post of this evening, promising some remarks on his work, would take the liberty of asking Mr. Coleman, whether they are, or are not, in favour of the publication? He makes this request, which may appear singular, on account of some inaccuracies which crept into the First Number, through entire accident, and which, though they might pass unnoticed by the community, probably would not escape the attention of a *Criticus*. He would farther observe, that although his extreme youth (being under the age of fourteen) might, in the eyes of

“many, be considered sufficient to deter him
 “from an undertaking of such magnitude, it
 “was commenced with a laudable design, and
 “as some apology for its errors, was an unas-
 “sisted attempt.”—I perused the note a se-
 cond time, and it will not, I think, be con-
 sidered strange or harsh, that I was incred-
 ulous to the story of the writer’s youth. I
 turned to his paper, and my incredulity was by
 no means lessened. It was difficult to believe,
 that a boy of thirteen years of age could pos-
 sess such strength and maturity of intellect.
 But to take up the story again;—I wrote him a
 note, inviting him to call in the evening. He
 did so, but his occupation in the counting-
 room had detained him till so late an hour,
 that I had gone out. In the morning he re-
 turned, and I saw him. I conversed with him
 for an hour; enquired into his history,—the
 time since he came to reside in this city,—(he
 told me he was a native of *New-York*, but was
 taken when an infant to *Boston*) and his object
 in setting on foot the publication in question.
 His answers were such as to dispel all doubts as
 to any imposition, and I found that it required
 an effort on my part to keep up the conversa-
 tion in as choice a style as his own. I have
 seen him repeatedly since, and have not only
 had the circumstance of his “extreme youth”
 confirmed, but, what has been my astonish-

ment to learn, that three years of his little life have been, as it were, blotted out of his existence by illness ; so that he is really to be considered as scarcely more than ten years of age. He has been introduced to some of the first circles in the city, as being, what he really is, a **PRODIGY**. Want of room prevents extending the narrative further. I have but one word to subjoin :—What encouragement do such talents in such a boy deserve ?”

From another American publication, the *Port-Folio*, for many years the most distinguished literary miscellany in that country, and edited by the late *Mr. Dennie* of *Philadelphia*, who has formed one of the few themes of *eulogia* in *Anacreon Moore’s Epistles on America*, we copy the following communication on the same subject. “ New York, February 4th, 1806. Our fashionables are all awake to the sudden appearance of a youth, who may justly be styled a *lusus naturæ*. This lad (who is not yet thirteen years of age) was first known, a fortnight since, as the Editor of a little paper, entitled the *Thespian Mirror*. The discovery of him was accidental, and made by *Mr. Coleman*, the Editor of the *Evening Post*; as he relates in an editorial paragraph of a recent date. By *Mr. Coleman* this extraordinary boy was immediately made acquainted with several literary gentlemen, whose admiration and as-

tonishment increased with every interview. Plans were immediately proposed for the suitable education of the lad, with a zeal and liberality, which nothing short of a miracle could have given birth to—acquaintances became his friends, and every one was impatient to know him; until the little Editor of the *Thespian Mirror* is almost the only topic of fashionable *table-talk*. This miraculous youth, whose personal acquaintance, I was among the first to be honored with, possesses a person short for one of his age; yet well-proportioned and graceful; a large blue eye of unusual sweetness and expression; and a complexion of the most susceptible delicacy. The *toute ensemble* of his features is discrimination and intelligence, added to a vivid consciousness, which is a language to his most latent emotions. His voice is music itself. His conversation is elevated and refined, and his writings, of which the public have as yet seen but hasty and imperfect specimens, possess a freedom from affectation, and a strength and maturity of character, which lead us to exclaim with the Bard of Mantua:

“ Qui tanti talem genuere parentes !

“ In what I have said, I have not been influenced by a blind admiration; or an unguarded zest for something new and strange: every in-

terview which I have with the lad, confirms the deeply-favorable impression created by his paper; a few numbers of which I transmit, as the best mode of introducing to your notice its interesting Editor."

The consequence of the extraordinary sensation produced by these events, was an influx of patronage both public and private, to such an extent, as caused the young Gentleman to be immediately transplanted from the counting-house to College. Another cotemporary publication adverts to the closing labors of his editorship in the following paragraph.—"We have received a note from the juvenile Editor of the Thespian Mirror, stating, that, as the Mirror "will be discontinued at the quarter's end, on account of his entering on Academical studies, he thinks proper to discourage further subscription." "Though we may regret the discontinuance of a paper so welcome as the Mirror, still we cannot too highly applaud the young Gentleman's modest relinquishment of what promised him so much immediate honour and praise, nor too warmly approve his determination to fit himself to become in a greater degree useful and precious to his country. There are few of us, either young or old, but feel the want of a more regular and extensive education.

" Go, hopeful youth! where science lights the way,
" Where learning best thy talents shall display;
" And may'st thou make, within collegiate bow'rs,
" Improvements equal to thy mental pow'rs;
" Then, if thou'lt pen what jointly these inspire,
" Our wishes and thy fame no more require!"

The College to which Mr. Payne was now consigned, was about two hundred miles distant from New-York, and the way to it led through a part of the United States embracing the most remarkable traits of romantic scenery to be met with in any part of the world. The gorgeous magnificence of the Hudson, and the wild splendour of the vales and mountains adjacent, might have been expected to have inspired a bosom new to the charms of travel, with enviable and delicious conceptions. A journal of the impressions excited in the mind of our young author, was, it seems, widely circulated in manuscript, and with a degree of éclat, of which the following verses, published in the American Annual Register of 1806-7, edited by Mr. Brown, the celebrated author of *Wieland*, *Ormond*, *Arthur Mervyn*, and *Edgar Huntly*, affords abundant evidence.

LINES BY A LADY,

ON READING THE MANUSCRIPT JOURNAL OF THAT
CELEBRATED LITTLE PRODIGY, J. H. PAYNE.

Sweet face ! where frolic fancies rove,
Where all youth's glowing graces reign,
Who art thou ? Genius ? Pleasure ? Love ?
The smiling vision answer'd, *Payne !*

I thought *Pain* was a spectre dire,
Was Genius', Love's or Pleasure's bane :
Thy cheek is health, *thy* eye is fire ;
No, beauteous youth ! thou art not *Pain !*

Ah, gentle maid ! if e'er thy breast
Knew transient joy, love's galling chain,
One ray of genius had'st possess'd,
Thou would'st have known they *all* were *Pain !*

Mr. Payne's progress in classical studies surpassed even the sanguine expectations that had been raised ; but, in the midst of his academical pursuits, a calamity befel his father, and brought the son suddenly into a public exercise of his scenic powers, to rescue his family from the affliction and sorrow of unforeseen loss of property and inevitable embarrassment.

When young Payne first heard of the heavy blow that had fallen on *his father's house*, the grateful son, with the most endearing filial piety and love, exclaimed—" *I will heal these paternal wounds, and build up this house,*" and flying to wrest it from ruin, presented

himself a candidate for fortune and fame at the *New-York Theatre*. Determined, however, not to bind himself altogether to theatrical pursuits, he began by making engagements for six nights each at the New-York and Boston Theatres; and to this plan of limited engagements he has adhered stedfastly since he first entered upon his career, intending, it is believed, to doff the buskin, as soon as it shall have produced him the means of establishing himself independently in some profession less liable to excite objections among the scrupulous. He made his first appearance in New-York, on the 24th of February, 1809, in the character of *Young Norval*, and with a success altogether unequalled in the annals of the American Drama. Seven distinct rounds of applause marked the death of Douglas. His benefit, at the end of the six nights, afforded him the means of shielding his father from a prison, producing a receipt of between one and two thousand dollars; and plainly proving the correctness of an impression which he had maintained in opposition to numerous advisers, that the Stage would afford the only means of immediate rescue from the exigencies of the moment—means, which no friend could supply, or, if possible to be supplied by friendship, involving too heavy an obligation to be accepted under such utter hopelessness of return. From New-York, he

immediately went to Boston, with increased fame and profit; commencing with the character of Douglas. On the occasion of his *debut* there, the following beautiful prologue, containing exquisite allusions to the events which brought him before the public, was spoken by the late Mr. Mills, who was once a member of the Theatre Royal, Manchester, and afterwards died in America.

“ Friends of the mimic world ! our scenes this night
An age of fame has sanction'd to delight !
Oft to their aid the fabling Muse has come,
And call'd up Roscius, from his shroud at Rome !
We, loath to wake again the Classic Ghost,
A native Roscius on our boards can boast.

“ A shepherd boy, in Celtic fiction drest,
The fire of nature struggling in his breast,
Forsook his cottage to achieve a name,
And found a mother, where he sought for fame !
Proud from her hand, the laurel he receives,
While tears of rapture glitter on its leaves !

“ This night, a brother champion will advance,
In Thespian tournament to break the lance !
He throws no gauntlet at a critic age,
Nor dares with wits a rude encounter wage ;
Yet like the Norval of a sterner clime,
He hopes a boy's ambition is no crime :
Like him, he dares aspire to earn a name,
Your heart his mother, your applause his fame !
Blest, if your eyes with beams of pleasure burn,
And humbly proud, if they correct, to learn.

“ Thus, would HE preface, with ingenuous tongue,
That manly worth, which should not pass unsung.

Though o'er his head life's spring has scarcely smil'd,
A Classic Actor, cannot be a child !
The rays of fancy youthful bosoms warm,
Learning and life, maturer minds inform !
Yet, here, in manhood's dawn, he dares to raise
The torch of science to the shrine of praise !
By genius fir'd, he yields to passion's glow,
Nor rules by verse, the prosody of woe !
The tear of feeling, art can ne'er supply,
The heart must moisten, ere it melts the eye !

“ His caves of voice no measur'd thunders roll !
He speaks from Nature, and he looks from soul :
In all the drama's technic lore untaught,
He reads by sentiment, and moves by thought.
When love-lorn pathos pours its melting moan,
Truth's fibre trembles at his touching tone !
When o'er the scene contending passions fly,
He groups the shadows with a poet's eye,
And when his brows the hero's plumes erect,
' The blood of Douglas, can itself protect !'
Through fiction's range he gives with skill profound,
Genius to grace, and eloquence to sound !
The tragic code of artificial speech,
Taste may reject, or discipline may teach ;
But, as the eye the trackless ridge explores,
Genius o'erleaps the cliff, where labour never soars !

“ An humble weed, transplanted from the waste,
Form'd the proud chapter of Grecian taste.
Chance dropp'd the weight the yielding foliage twin'd,
And droop'd with graceful negligence inclin'd—
Sculpture a model saw, to art unknown,
Copied the form, and turn'd the plant to stone !
The chisell'd weed adorn'd the temple's head,
And gods were worshipp'd where its branches spread !
If, in our Norval, candid judges find
Some kindred flower to grace the stage design'd ;

If, to the pressure, Fortune has impos'd,
You owe those talents, CHOICE had ne'er disclos'd;
If, like the grac'd Acanthus he appear,
Be you Callimachus,—be Corinth, here!

The selections which follow this biography, altogether supersede the necessity of dilating upon the subject of the success of Mr. Payne's subsequent professional career. He afterwards pursued his course through all the theatres of the United States, including an extent of more than two thousand miles. It has been represented as his intention from the first to visit England, and after storing his mind with the best instruction to be derived from the fine models of British excellence, to return and finish his dramatic labours within a few years in his native land. He judged, and judged rightly, that it was only by studying the best specimens of superior histrionic talent here, and performing on a British Stage, that he could confirm the reputation he had acquired in America. Such was the motive, such the merit, such the success, and such the reward of this amiable youth! We cannot repress the admiration which every good mind must cherish toward him, who, seeing his father, mother, sisters, and brothers, suddenly plunged into distress, instantly suspends his loved studies to contribute to the support and happiness of his still more beloved friends, and, unappalled, embraces

and succeeds in one of the most difficult of all pursuits. Mr. Payne has never identified himself with the profession of acting. Various kinds of elegant literature came from his pen during his dramatic career. His abilities procured him real friends, fame, and profit; and the purity of his principles, the exemplary rectitude of his habits, the elegance of his demeanour, and the active benevolence of his disposition, have secured him all the advantages he has gained. He has been distinguished not only as an essayist and a poet, but once made himself remarkable for a bold effort in support of the liberty of the press. The printing establishment of the Federal Republican newspaper in Baltimore being assailed by a desperate mob, was levelled to the ground in consequence of some articles censuring the declaration of war against Great Britain. The intimate friend of Mr. Payne, the Honourable A. C. Hanson, now a very distinguished orator in the Congress of the United States, was one of the proprietors of that establishment, and, determined not to brook such an infringement of his rights, undertook to re-establish his paper, and fortified a house to repel any repetition of the former outrage. Details of the horrible scenes of butchery which followed, have been already made familiar to our countrymen by their re-publication from the American papers. At the present mo-

ment, we only renew the shocking recollection as relating to Mr. Payne, whose departure for England immediately afterwards might have been hastened by disgust at such occurrences, and who is honourably noticed in the following extract from Mr. Hanson's address to his constituents, occasioned by the affair.—“ But, apprehending, should I go entirely without the means of self-defence, much mischief might be perpetrated by a sudden onset, before the civil authority should have time for effectual interposition, I thought it proper to accept the aid of a few friends, (seven in number—Gen. Lingan (murdered)—Dr. P. Warfield, Capt. R. I. Crabb, Charles J. Kilgour, Ephraim Gaither, Otho Sprigg, and JOHN HOWARD PAYNE) —whose gallantry, love of justice and patriotism, would not permit me to go alone to Baltimore, without the means of endeavouring to repel any violence that might be attempted, until efficient protection could be afforded by the legal authority.”

On Mr. Payne's arrival in England, apprehensive that the war might excite prejudice against him, or that his having borne in America the title of a Roscius, might provoke an impression that he came forward with some arrogance of pretension, he very studiously suppressed his name, and appeared at the Theatre Royal, Drury-Lane, on the 4th of June, 1813,

announced as follows. "The part of *Norval* by a "young gentleman, his first appearance in London." The season of the year was perhaps the worst which could have been selected, and the *Fourth of June* is ranked among the most ineffective nights in the whole run of a London season. Of the warmth of his reception the criticisms we have preserved bear ample testimony. It was unfortunate for *Mr. Payne*, that some ill-natured person propagated through the papers, a report of his being an illegitimate son of the infamous Tom Paine; and, still more so that some well-meaning, but misjudging friend should have brought the report into more extended notice, by a serious and laboured contradiction.

The late celebrated Mr. Cooke seems to have held this young gentleman in high esteem, and the following anecdotes from his *Memoirs* by Dunlap, are too interesting to be neglected. In a journal kept by our great but eccentric actor, the following notice of Mr. Payne occurs among remarks made during the first few days of his residence in America. We only regret, in transcribing it, that it should be stained by a prejudiced allusion to Mr. Betty, whose character is diametrically opposite to what Mr. Cooke implied, being distinguished by great amiableness of heart, and urbanity of demeanour.

"I was visited," says Cooke, "by Master

Payne, the American Roscius: I thought him a polite, sensible youth, and the reverse of *our* young Roscius." In different parts of the same work, we find the following anecdotes. "About this time the manager made an engagement with Master Payne, to play a few nights with Mr. Cooke. Mr. Cooke, as has been seen, had been waited upon by Master Payne, immediately after his arrival, and was much pleased with his manners and conversation, making comparisons between him and Master Betty, very much in favour of the American young Roscius. Master Payne very properly took every opportunity of cultivating an acquaintance with the veteran tragedian, and frequently visited him, and sat with him for hours. On these occasions, whether with other company or not, the bottle was always present; but Cooke not only did not offer wine to his young companion, but told him he ought to avoid it. Master Payne, in the course of these visits, could not but witness such behaviour on the part of his sage adviser, as would operate with more force than his admonitions. Once, when sitting with him at the Tontine, the veteran taking his glass after dinner, and chatting very pleasantly, Mr. Duffie, formerly on the stage in Dublin, who frequently visited Mr. Cooke, called in. Cooke received him with a cool kind of civility, desired him to take a chair, and then continued talking to Master

Payne. " Mr. Duffie, help yourself to a glass
" of wine—John, I don't ask you to drink.
" O, that I had had some friend when I was at
" your age, to caution, to prevent me from
" drinking!—Mr. Duffie, your good health.—
" Yes, John, I should have been a very differ-
" ent man from what I am. It's too late now."

Notwithstanding the kindness with which he treated Master Payne, and the terms of approbation with which he spoke of him, Mr. Cooke found an additional cause of chagrin in the idea of his being engaged to supply that deficiency in the attraction of the theatre, which was felt, even when Richard displayed his banners at Bosworth, or Falstaff led his ragamuffins to be peppered at Shrewsbury. The appearance of the audiences, during his second visit to New-York, was a mortifying contrast to that of the first; and now to have a boy called in to support him, wounded his pride so deeply, that he could not conceal his irritation, or its cause. On Monday the 25th of February, 1811, the tragedy of *Douglas* was advertised. Young Norval, Mr. Payne—Glenalvon, Mr. Cooke. But Mr. Cooke was sick, and could not come. He remained at home until the first of March, when he came out to play for Mr. Payne's benefit. The tragedy of *Lear* was announced—Lear, Mr. Cooke; Edgar, Mr. Payne. The house was pretty well filled; the

amount 927 dollars. In the course of the performance, Knox, a performer sent from England by Mr. Cooper, who was eternally drunk, in playing Glo'ster, irritated Cooke, as he had often done before, and when the veteran heard him exclaim,

“ O gentle gods! give Glo'ster his discharge!”

He said, loud enough to be heard by those on the stage, “ wait till Saturday, you black-guard, and the manager will give it you !”

During this visit to New-York, Mr. Cooke exhibited himself at a tea-party. Mr. Payne had frequently pressed him to make a visit at his father's house, about two miles from Cooke's lodgings ; and at length a time was appointed when he should pass the evening with his young friend. A party of ladies and gentlemen met, all anxious to see this extraordinary creature, and anticipating the pleasure to be derived, as they supposed, from his conversation, his humour, and his wit. Cooke, true to his engagement this time, refused an invitation to dinner, and waited for his young admirer to lead him to the circle of his friends ; but tired of solitude, he sent for Bryden *pour passer le temps* over a bottle of Madeira, and when Mr. Payne arrived with a coach to convey him to the tea-party, Cooke was charged much higher with wine than with wit.

He was, however, dressed, and as he thought, prepared, and it would not do on his companion's part to suggest any thing to the contrary, besides, that the effect of what he had taken did not yet appear in its most glaring consequences. They arrived, and Cooke, with that stiffness produced by the endeavour to counteract involuntary motion, was introduced into a large circle of gentlemen, distinguished for learning, or wit, or taste; and ladies, equally distinguished for those acquirements and endowments most valued in their sex. A part of the property of the Tragedian which had been seized by the custom-house officers under the non-importation law, had not been yet released, owing to some delay from necessary form, and this was a constant subject of irritation to him, particularly that they should withhold from him the celebrated cups presented to him by the Liverpool managers; and now his introductory speech among his expecting circle, was addressed to one of the gentlemen, with whom he was acquainted, and was an exclamation, without any prefatory matter, of "they have stolen my cups!" The astonishment of such an assembly may be imagined. After making his bows with much circumspection, he seated himself, and very wisely stuck to his chair for the remainder of the evening; and he likewise stuck to his text, and his cups triumphed over

every image that could be presented to his imagination. "Madam, they have stopped my cups. Why did they not stop my swords?" "No, they let my swords pass. But my cups will melt, and they have a greater love for silver than for steel. My swords would be useless with them; but they can melt my cups, and turn them to dollars! And my Shakespeare—they had better keep that: they need his instruction, and may improve by him—if they know how to read him." Seeing a print of Kemble in Rolla, he addressed it: "Ah, John, are you there!" then turning to Mr. Payne, he, in his half-whispering manner, added, "I don't want to die in this country—John Kemble will laugh."—

Among the company was an old and tried revolutionary officer—a true patriot of 1776. Hearing Cooke rail against the country and the government, he at first began to explain, and then to defend; but soon finding what his antagonist's situation was, he ceased opposition. Cooke continued his insolence, and finding that he was unnoticed, and even what he said in the shape of query unattended to, he went on: "That's right, you are prudent—the government may hear of it—walls have ears!" Tea was repeatedly presented to him, which he refused. The little black girl with her tray next offered him cake—this he rejected with some

asperity. Fruit was offered to him, and he told the girl he was "sick of seeing her face." Soon after, she brought him wine. "Why, you 'little black angel!'" says Cooke, taking the wine, "you look like the devil, but you bear 'a passport that would carry you unquestioned 'into Paradise!'"

The company separated early, and Mr. Payne happily resigned his visitor to the safe keeping of the waiters of the Tontine coffee-house."

We shall conclude this sketch with an anecdote, which equally shews the estimation in which Mr. Payne was held by his countrymen, and that peculiar character of precocity by which we have always considered the minds, as well as the persons, of the North Americans to be distinguished. Mr. Payne was present at a public school examination of the female pupils of the Rev. Mr. Taylor, of Norfolk, Virginia, where the fair students were required to write something unpremeditated either in prose or poetry upon a slate, and then to *parse* it. One of the ladies, a young girl of about thirteen, with much blushing and hesitation, read the following, when called upon to produce her exercise;

"That *pain* can give pleasure, we boldly maintain,
 "But who is there here can give *pleasure* to *Payne*?
 "Here's no witching beauty, whose glances can blind;—
 "No fav'rite of Nature, unrivall'd in mind;—

- " And yet there's one merit to which we lay claim ;
- " We admire real genius, and give it its fame.
- " And hence, tow'ring youth ! with true *pleasure* we view,
- " An abstract of all that's enchanting in YOU !"

THE accident which has thrown into our possession the American Publications from which this Biography is compiled, and the first portion of the following Criticisms selected, could not, of course, be expected to afford more than a mere gleanings from the various productions upon the same subject. We do not, by any means, pretend to the offer of a complete collection. There are enough, however, to exhibit the general style of American criticism, and they display an intimate knowledge and love of the Drama, which could scarcely have been expected from so new a country. In this particular they are curious, as shedding some light on the history of the American Stage.—The criticisms of Charleston, and some other portions of the United States, have been rejected, as being mere repetitions of those which are retained. We sincerely lament, however, that it has not been in our power to procure any one of the criticisms on Mr. Payne's first appearance on any stage, the first in this work having been written after he had acted four or five nights.

MR. PAYNE'S
PERFORMANCES IN NEW-YORK.



FROM THE LITERARY MISCELLANY.

AMERICAN ROSCIUS.

MASTER PAYNE continues to merit the encomiums, which on his first appearance were lavished upon him. His *Zaphna*, in *Mahomet*, deservedly increased his reputation. Perhaps it is his master-piece.

When *Octavian*, in the *Mountaineers*, was announced, expectation was on tip-toe, and anxiety was felt, lest our young hero should sink under the weight of this very arduous character; but his conception of it was clear, and his execution in many instances so fine, that he drew from the audience loud and repeated bursts of applause.

His *Achmet*, in *Barbarossa*, was exquisite, his deportment manly, and his utterance free and deliberate.

In *Tancred*, on Wednesday evening, he was not, throughout, equally successful. He is a gentle little lover, but in the violence of passion, nature, which he must correct by art, hurries him into such a quickness of utterance as to impair the effect which he intends, and which a regulated effort would undoubtedly occasion. In his interview with *Osmond*, after the fatal marriage, where he at once appeared as the hero and the tyrant, he had great merit, and his merit was rewarded by the reiterated plaudits of the house.

Master Payne's engagement, we understand, expires on Monday evening next. He plays *Romeo* for his benefit on Wednesday, on which occasion we hope

and trust the taste and genial spirit of our citizens will shine conspicuous, in fostering the dawns of genius, by a general attendance of the Theatre.

New-York, March 11, 1809.



FROM THE NEW-YORK CITIZEN.

MASTER PAYNE's engagement here terminated on Monday evening last, when he performed for his own benefit, the part of *Zaphna*, in Voltaire's tragedy of Mahomet. Many persons have thought Payne chargeable with indiscretion, for attempting characters whose marks of age he could not possibly assume. Happily, in the present instance, he did not subject himself to the embarrassment attending such a choice, but in personating *Zaphna*, found that in figure and voice he was sufficiently at home. The writer of this article had seen in Master Payne's effusions, proofs of no common genius, and was therefore more delighted than surprised at the irresistible claims on applause urged by his *Zaphna*. Did I consider clapping of hands, and stamping of feet, as the only or principal evidences of judicious approbation, the guilt of palpable solecism would here press heavily upon me; for of this noisy praise there was little: but when I reflect that "expressive silence" may indicate the strongest admiration and the deepest interest, and when I assert that this silence was *Zaphna's* boon, candour must forbid the blush which captious ridicule might wish to excite. Possessing as I do but a slight knowledge of this tragedy, it is not my intention to attempt a minute criticism on the various parts of Payne's performance: I shall only mention a few instances in

which his conception and his acting were (it is thought) peculiarly fine. Bred in the school of superstition, and blindly devoted to the precepts of his prophet and monarch, Zaphna is directed by Mirvan to assassinate Alcanor—Alcanor, the innocent and brave defender of his people, and the disinterested friend of his unhappy murderer. In disclosing the various and contending emotions, which, under such circumstances, may be supposed to distract a youthful and ingenuous soul, Payne was singularly happy. He displayed accurately religious resolution in his bloody purpose, and melting pity for its devoted object; now yielding to the strong impulses of his generous nature, a melancholy smile played upon his features; but the tremendous oath rushed across his brain, and again he was adamant.—I pass now to the period when, having stabbed Alcanor, and left him in his blood, Zaphna returns wild with passion to his beloved Palmira. Rarely, very rarely, I venture to affirm, has our stage afforded a parallel to Payne in this scene. The manner in which he displayed to the overwhelmed object of his affection, his bloody hands, and the cast of countenance which he assumed when he bade her look on them, beggar all description which does not employ voice and action. Zaphna's subsequent interview with Alcanor languishing under a mortal wound, yet caressing him who had inflicted it, and his reluctant submission to the fatal poison which sent him unrevenged to his grave, served to confirm the glowing impressions already excited in favour of this surprising boy.

New-York, March 15th, 1810.

FROM THE NEW-YORK EVENING POST.

GENIUS AND VIRTUE.

'TWAS that calm hour when evening's mellow glow,
Shed on the silver stream soft hues of light,
That sweetly mingled as the gliding waves,
In gentle undulations softly flow'd :
Nought breath'd around save echo's magic voice,
That on the bosom of the genial air
In trembling notes melodiously expir'd.

The song of rapture from Creation's breast
In grateful silence rose—
When lo ! I heard a voice
So ravishingly sweet,
It seiz'd my raptur'd soul,
My heart tumultuous beat.

The agitated breeze
Enchanted with the sound,
Trembled as through bright Ether's fields
It wafted it around !

The ~~western~~ clouds dissolv'd
In ecstasy away ;
Nor veil'd a form whose dazzling light
Relumines dying day.

Hast thou not heard in dreams,
The soul of music flow
From airy harps and hands unseen,
To check thy rising woe ?

Thou hast ; but ah ! the notes
That on my senses rung,
Were sweeter than those airy harps,
For thus bright Genius sung :

- " Mortals, whose hearts can feel
 " Th' extreme of bliss or woe,
 " Accept the boon I give,
 " The blessing I bestow.
- " Did'st thou not see a shepherd boy
 " Support a warrior's shield;
 " And in an injur'd mother's cause
 " The sword of justice wield?
- " And did'st thou in the pride of youth
 " Behold young Selim tower
 " Above ambition, and by truth
 " Subdue the tyrant's power?
- " Thou did'st; for o'er young Norval's fate
 " Soft Pity wept and sigh'd,
 " And Admiration smil'd elate,
 " When Barbarossa died.
- " Who e'er beheld a nobler air,
 " Or view'd a finer face?
 " This ow'd expression to my care,
 " That stole from ev'ry grace.
- " And when he heard the bursting sigh,
 " Or kindled with disdain;
 " I dew'd his cheek, I fir'd his eye,
 " And gave you pleasure in the form of Payne!
- " Fame from Apollo's lyre
 " A wreath of laurel stole,
 " Whose leaves were gemm'd with dew
 " That sprung from Pity's soul
- " She plac'd it on his brow,
 " Then loudly sung the strain—
 " I've crown'd the youth who here below
 " Is child of Genius, and the heir of Fame."

Longer had Genius sung
The theme to her so dear;
But wonder chain'd her tongue,
For Music charm'd her ear.

Such music as might speed,
The mounting soul to Heaven,
From mortal trouble freed,
And all its sins forgiven.

The eastern clouds remov'd
Triumphantly away;
Nor veil'd a form whose tranquil light
Shone on declining day.

Hast thou not heard in dreams
The soul of music flow,
From angels' harps, and angels' tongues,
To check each rising woe?

Thou hast, and oh! the sounds
That on my senses rung,
Were sweet as those from angels' harps,
For thus mild Virtue sung:

" Imperious Genius! dost thou claim
" Exclusively this child of Fame?
" Dost thou not know the greater part
" Is mine,—the generous feeling heart?
" That each emotion I control,
" Which animates his manly soul?
" Boast not that o'er his youthful face
" Thou hast diffus'd Expression's grace,
" Or dew'd his cheek, or fir'd his eye,
" Or made him heave the bursting sigh;
" While I can boast, that by my pow'r
" He sooth'd a parent's anguish'd hour,
" And from the dreary couch of Care,
" Drove the dull spirit of Despair.

" And bade approaching Joy bestow
 " Peace o'er the couch, where hover'd *Woe!*"
 Here Virtue ceas'd, and Genius cri'd,
 " Now shall my constancy be tried.
 " I never will resign *my* part,
 " I'll rule his *head*;"—" And I his *heart!*"
 Sweet Virtue cries,— " And we will join
 " Our best exertions, and combine
 " All gifts of Virtue, Genius, Fame,
 " And shower them on our darling *Payne!*"

Genius assented, Virtue smil'd,
 And sweeter strains arose,
 Than when o'er Memnon's trembling lyre,
 Apollo glanc'd his eye of fire,
 To soothe the hero's woes.

While as a pledge of Truth and Love,
 Their proffer'd hands were given;
 Borne on the bosom of the air,
 They soar'd above the sphere of care,
 To watch their charge in heaven!

1810.

IMOGEN.

MR. PAYNE'S
 PERFORMANCES IN BOSTON.

FROM THE BOSTON GAZETTE.

AMERICAN ROSCIUS.

MASTER J. H. PAYNE, of this town, has completed
 his engagement at New-York, with the most brilliant
 success; and afterwards, by request, performed an
 additional night. In force of genius, and taste in
belles lettres, there are few actors on any stage, who

can claim any competition with him. This is not flattery, and if it were, it would not be pernicious to *him*, who has so uniformly been quoted as a rare instance of intellectual precocity. But his successful application even of these thrifty and uncommon properties of mind, to the profession of the stage, will excite some wonder, when it is known, that he has had no preceptor in "the artifice of speech," that his word and his action have been disciplined only by his own judgment, and that he steps before the public, full-grown like Minerva, without being indebted to Jupiter's head for his origin.

A letter from New-York, which we have before us, states, "I have seen Master Payne in Douglas, Zaphna, Selim, and Octavian, and may truly say, I think him superior to Betty in all. There, was one scene of his Zaphna, which exhibited more taste and sensibility, than I have witnessed since the days of Garrick. He has astonished every body." The writer of this letter, we may add, has seen all the best actors from Garrick to Kemble. This account may amaze the incredulous, but it has been truly said by the poet, that

"The art of acting, its perfection draws

"From genius, more than from mechanic laws."



FROM THE ORDEAL.

MASTER J. H. PAYNE, who has lately distinguished himself at New-York, by his personation of several important dramatic characters, and surprised the inhabitants of that city by his uncommon powers of elocution, has appeared on the Boston stage, where he has performed the parts of *Norval* in Douglas, and *Zaphna* in Mahomet, with extraordinary skill. We

34 *Mr. Payne's Performances in Boston.*

believe we only echo the public opinion, in declaring, that his judgment seldom fails of correctness, that his elocution is remarkable for its purity, and his action and deportment are eminently well suited to the passion he represents, and the sentiments he pronounces. He has satisfied the judgment of the impartial, whilst he has exceeded their expectations; and he has amply gratified the wishes of the friendly, by the success which he has hitherto obtained.

Boston, April 8, 1809.



FROM THE ORDEAL.

MASTER PAYNE has finished his performances at the Boston theatre, with great credit to himself, and satisfaction to the public. He has played eight important dramatic characters*, with various success; in some of them, the powers he evinced were absolutely astonishing; in others he was deficient in force of utterance and identity of conception; but in all of them, his "defects were only as dust in the ascending scale of his merits."

Boston, April 29, 1809.



FROM THE REPERTORY.

AMERICAN ROSCIUS.

MASTER J. H. PAYNE, has performed in this town the arduous and diversified characters of Norval and

* Norval, Zaphna, Romeo, Selim, Octavian, Tancred, Hamlet and Rolla.

Mr. Payne's Performances in Providence. 33

Zephna, with the highest critical approbation. His readings, though classical, are not "caviare to the general;"—and in the elegant appropriation of gesture, he seems to be aware, that—"in such business, action is eloquence; and the eyes of the ignorant more learned than the ears."

Boston, April 7, 1809.



FROM THE PATRIOT,

MASTER PAYNE made his first appearance on the Boston boards last evening, in the interesting character of Young Norval. The house was crowded—and the most brilliant circle that we have for a long time witnessed at the theatre, realized the high expectations which had been raised, of the exquisite performance of this favourite child of Thespis.

Boston, April 4, 1809.



MR. PAYNE'S

PERFORMANCES IN PROVIDENCE, (R. I.)



FROM THE RHODE-ISLAND AMERICAN.

THIS town has recently been indulged with a visit from Mr. Payne, better known by the name of the American Roscius. When his panegyricks were running the newspaper rounds, we preserved an obstinate and stubborn incredulity. Puffs of this kind are so common, and so indiscriminately bestowed, that they seemed to us evidence as decisive that the subject did not merit them, as that he did. Chance, or unex-

pected good fortune, at length gave us the more decisive testimony of ears and eyes. From repeated evidences of this kind, we are happy now to concur in those applauses. Mr. Payne in a small party, recited Collins's *Ode on the Passions*, which has been by critics thought, and justly so, the criterion of merit. In the present instance, we do believe our judgment was unbiassed and impartial. So far from being under the predominance of the popular prepossession, we struggled against it, but such efforts were in vain. We were caught involuntarily by the magnetism of his manner, and all the passions delineated in that delightful Ode, were as forcibly reflected on our hearts. If in such a turmoil of surprise we should select one stanza in preference to another, it is this,

"Last came Joy's extatick trial, &c."

His voice and cadence on this stanza were so measured, that we actually thought his words dancing a cotillion together.

It has been the usual fate of genius to contend with public insensibility and neglect. The trial has in most instances been too severe, and genius has fallen a victim in the contest. A struggle of another kind, though not less arduous, awaits Mr. Payne; he has to contend with the *admiration* of the public; he has to *continue* to deserve it. Let him reflect, that the splendid plume that now waves on his brow, tinged by the beams of an auspicious sun, may lose its lustre for ever. Popular applause has often proved a Delilah's lap, in which those who slumber are shorn of their strength. In his future exertions he has our best wishes, and we should feel an honest pride in their eventual accomplishment. Many will think this paragraph a tame

subserviency to flattery which we have not the manliness to resist. To those hunters-out, of mean motives, for coldly just actions, a contemptuous silence shall be our only reply.

Providence, Sept. 26, 1809.

MR. PAYNE'S

PERFORMANCES IN BALTIMORE.

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**FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLICAN.**

WE are particularly pleased to learn that the celebrated Master Payne of New-York, has arrived in this city. The admirers of the Drama will have an opportunity of gratifying their curiosity, by witnessing the performance of this extraordinary youth.

The private character of Master Payne is not less meritorious, than his talents are rare and remarkable. He is peculiarly distinguished for his filial piety. We hope the public will be speedily gratified by seeing him on the Baltimore boards, filling those characters in which he has so often shone most conspicuously.

*Baltimore, Oct. 1810.*

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FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLICAN.

ON Friday evening Master Payne made his first appearance on the Baltimore stage, in the character of Young Norval. By far the most brilliant auditory that has been assembled this season, crowded the Thea-

tre, to witness the astonishing powers of this wonderful youth. He was received with those grateful plaudits due to his exalted genius and talents, and worthy of an enlightened and liberal assembly.

It is not our object to write a formal and ceremonious critique upon Master Payne's performance. His fascinating grace, his polished style, his harmonious voice, and the admirable tragic powers of his mind, place him beyond the reach of a critic's envy or malignity. Whether he has suddenly usurped too great a degree of public estimation, or by the blaze of his genius blinded and dazzled his admirers, certain it is, that the excellencies and bright virtues which adorn his early years, have raised him to an elevated rank in the esteem and wonder of his acquaintances.

To describe merit with coldness or enthusiastic exaggeration, should be equally avoided. When nature and truth draw the picture, the likeness will not be defective, nor can real worth be wounded by the poisoned arrows of invidious criticism. The wonderful exhibition of genius by Master Payne may excite jealousy, and provoke malignant animosity, but his fame will continue undiminished. He will rise in the estimation of honest judges, while he is snarled at by the angry and jealous critic.

The character of Young Norval in every scene was sustained to the delight of an astonished audience. Public expectation had, indeed, been raised to an high pitch, but all that was anticipated by his warmest friends, was more than realized. In the quarrel with Glenalvon, the description of the Hermit, and more particularly in the scene where his mother discloses to him the secret of his noble birth, he showed himself the chaste and classick actor. But when the

single arm of a Shepherd's Boy had achieved the chivalrous deed of slaying his coward and perfidious assailant, and he rushes forward to protect his defenceless mother, a loud burst of applause issued from every quarter of the theatre, and Norval expired, while the house was drowned with tears.

Such acting has never been surpassed on the American boards. Certain it is, that this particular character has never been performed in this country to meet, so nicely, the conception of the author. The style was entirely new, original, and peculiar to *our Roscius*. Genius like his disdains to imitate, and nature has been his only tutor. He has sprung up as it were like the brilliant fire of some new volcano, with its overcoming and dazzling light, rivetting amazement upon surrounding spectators. It would seem enchantment, that a boy like this should convey alternate horror and delight to others' breasts, and then again extract rivers of tears for his fancied woes, even from the stranger's eyes.

Our Roscius never strikes the air with an empty, unmeaning, dying sound. His utterance is melodious, strong, and critically exact. Even in his days of childhood, he proved himself the master of his language, and with his pen instructed and amused. In his rapid march to fame and greatness, he has never been the slave of circumstances. He has marked out his own course, and pursued it with a steady undeviating step. His attachment to learning is lively and strong. While an infant, like the busy little bee, he seems to have sipped sweets from every literary flower. Can we be mistaken, when we say the bosom of Master Payne is the asylum of every noble and refined passion; that he

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displays in public, and in private, all the finer and polished feelings of the heart?

Baltimore, Oct. 23, 1809.



FROM THE FEDERAL GAZETTE.

A NEW SOURCE OF PLEASURE.

Our joys now on earth must increase beyond measure,
For thousands have witness'd that *Payne* can give *pleasure*;
Ye sceptics, make trial; you'll ne'er doubt again—
You'll receive at the theatre, *pleasure* from *Payne*.



FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLICAN.

MASTER PAYNE's engagement with the Manager of the Baltimore theatre, closed on Saturday last. It has had a most successful and brilliant termination. He has performed every night to crowded houses, and has completely possessed himself of the admiration and regard of all who have seen him and know him.

The characters which he has personated in his six nights of performance, are Douglas, Rolla, Hamlet, Octavian, Frederick, and Romeo. It is difficult to say in which he most excelled; but public opinion seems to incline most to his Douglas, Hamlet, and Octavian. The character of the first is better adapted to his age and size, but even in that of Rolla, we are forced to forget that our little hero of the buskin is deficient in figure and personal prowess. His assumed dignity of look, and the power of his voice, make up for all that is wanting in a masculine appearance.

The Manager of the theatre has been liberally and deservedly remunerated for his engagement with Master Payne, but it remains to be seen in what manner the public will reward the latter, who has contributed so largely to its amusement and delight. He has yet received no equivalent for his unrivalled efforts to charm and captivate our enlightened citizens. By his agreement with Mr. Warren, a free benefit was to be his only remuneration. It depends, therefore, upon the munificence and generosity of those who have witnessed with rapture the wonderful exertion of genius, whether that remuneration shall be scanty or abundant.

Master Payne has selected the character of *Tancred* for his benefit, which we understand to be his favourite part. It is well suited to his appearance and style of acting, and from the circumstance of young Betty's shining more in *Tancred* than in any other character, we hope to be highly gratified with the performance of this evening.

On Friday night the benefit was announced for Monday, and on Saturday, contrary to all former practice, even the boxes in the gallery were taken. In addition to this, some generous citizens have purchased a number of tickets, which they mean not to use. Such are the deserts of merit; and it is our earnest wish, that the youth may receive hundreds upon hundreds to aid him in the pious work of assisting his poor, but worthy family.



FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLICAN.

THOMSON'S tragedy of *Tancred and Sigismunda* was performed on Monday night, for the benefit of

Master Payne. All the boxes in the gallery, a circumstance that never before occurred in this city, were engaged on the Saturday preceeding the night of performance. The citizens seemed to vie with each other, in the laudable endeavour to confer a suitable reward upon the talents and merits of our young Roscius. The concourse of persons which crowded the theatre to testify their admiration of his genius, was immense. The upper and lower lobbies even were thronged with spectators, and we understand that numbers left the theatre for want of accommodation.

When *Tancred* made his appearance, there was one universal burst of applause. As he gracefully bowed to the audience, the plaudits became louder and louder, and every countenance was lighted up with admiration of the interesting and surprising youth. Throughout the play he personated the character of the young Prince of Sicily in a style of superior grace and dignity. In his interviews with Sigismunda, where the tender passions were to be expressed, he was particularly great. When in a paroxysm of mingled rage and despair, he falls prostrate by the side of his expiring mistress, three long and distinct peals of applause, conveyed to Master Payne the just admiration of the audience for his transcendant talents.—What it has cost other eminent actors years of labour, tutorage and travel to acquire, Master Payne has learnt in a few months, and has looked to nature as his sole instructor. The celebrated Cooper, so well known on the American boards, was drilled by Holcroft in London, upwards of one year before he appeared on the stage; and has since had the advantage of at least ten years of experience and study, as well as of witnessing the performance of the greatest actors in Europe. Notwith-

standing, the public voice pronounces that he is far from being the superior of our Roscius in several of the most difficult characters. 'If Mr. Payne is thus great at the age of seventeen, and has had but a few months practice, what may be expected of him when enriched by the advantages of his rival? We anticipate the period with pleasure, when he will stand pre-eminent and unequalled in his profession. He is a native of the United States, and our partiality for him is at least pardonable on that account.

Between twelve and fourteen hundred dollars were received by Master Payne for his benefit. This has no precedent in Baltimore. The amount is three hundred dollars more than was ever before received at this theatre, and is as much more than the house can accommodate. Such an occurrence does honour to the taste and liberality of our citizens.

Baltimore, Nov. 1, 1809.



FROM THE PEOPLE'S MONITOR.

TRIBUTE TO MERIT.

MASTER J. H. PAYNE, the theatrical phenomenon of the new world, has lately performed for a few evenings at the Baltimore theatre.

Happening to be in Baltimore at the time, I was a constant attendant upon the theatre. I went at first, as did probably most others, attracted thither by idle curiosity, and fully expecting to see some favourite part murdered by the misconceptions and rant of a pert, conceited boy. How greatly was I deceived! I found in Master Payne not only all the graces, but all the judgment and discrimination of the most

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finished and experienced actor, and notwithstanding his want of size, and his youthful voice, I was compelled to yield to the delusions of fancy, and to imagine I saw in him all the valiant heroes or sighing lovers whom he chose successively to represent.

What gave me additional pleasure, was the reflection that he was an American. I honour genius and worth, wherever and in whomsoever they may be found; but in an American I almost adore them. It adds something to a man's own importance, (especially in his own estimation), when he can stand up before an admiring world, and say of an extraordinary genius—"He is my countryman!"

Master Payne's benefit was on Monday night, when the largest and most brilliant audience that ever graced the Baltimore theatre, attended, to testify their unqualified approbation of his extraordinary talents; and we may safely say, that never was an actor more richly compensated, or an audience more highly delighted.

The occasion gave rise to the following neat *jeu d'esprit*, which appeared in the Federal Gazette of Tuesday:

" THE RETORT COURTEOUS.

- " All those who from Payne had experienc'd delight,
- " With increas'd admiration and pleasure each night,
- " To evince their desire of delighting again,
- " Attended last night, and gave pleasure to PAYNE."

November, 1809.

FROM THE AMERICAN.

The tragedy of Tancred and Sigismunda was acted on Monday evening, before the most numerous, most brilliant, and it may safely be added, the most delighted audience that ever graced the theatre in this city. The part of Tancred was performed by Master Payne, with a spirit and correctness which has seldom been equalled. The genuine exhibition of Nature which is so conspicuous in every word, gesture and action of this astonishing youth, never fails to interest the feelings of his audience; while his just conception of every character in which he has appeared, evidences a maturity of judgment, and a knowledge of the human heart at his early age, which is rarely to be met with among old and experienced performers. The general and reiterated applause with which every part of his performance was received on Monday evening, gave pleasing evidence that he was not less interesting than on former occasions.

Those who know Master Payne intimately, represent him to be as amiable in his private character as in his public he is excellent. It will therefore be gratifying to a generous public to know, that while they have liberally rewarded early genius and youthful merit, by a benefit far beyond any ever received here, they have furnished modest worth and filial piety, with the means of gratifying the sweetest feelings of the heart.

Baltimore, Nov. 1, 1809.

FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLICAN.

WE cannot repress our astonishment at Mr. Warren's omission to gratify the public with a few more performances by Master Payne. The benefit would be reciprocal. Mr. Warren would be liberally rewarded, and the public highly entertained. Numbers have expressed the greatest desire to see Master Payne in Zaphna, Hastings, Selim, and several other characters which he has performed with great applause. The Manager of the theatre will soon find that his interest will be promoted by renewing his engagement with the American Roscius.

Baltimore, Nov. 1809.



FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLICAN.

IT is with great satisfaction we announce the renewal of Master Payne's engagement with the Manager of the Baltimore theatre. The public voice called loudly for such an arrangement, and it is due to Mr. Warren, to state, that he lost no time to gratify the admirers of the drama as soon as their wishes were distinctly expressed. Master Payne will perform three nights more, and from the increased desire manifested to witness again the surprising efforts of his genius, we have no doubt that both he and the Manager will be liberally remunerated. We understand that Selim, Hamlet, and Zaphna, are the three characters which will be performed on Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, when Master Payne departs for an engagement in Richmond.

Baltimore, Nov. 1809.

MR. PAYNE'S
PERFORMANCES IN PHILADELPHIA.



FROM THE MIRROR OF TASTE, OR DRAMATIC CENSOR.

HAVING brought our critical journal up to the appearance of that phenomenon of the stage of this New World, Master Payne, we find ourselves constrained, by the limits of this number, to postpone our observations upon the plays in which that extraordinary boy, for so many nights, astonished and delighted crowded houses, and, far beyond our expectations, made good his title to the partiality of every city in which he has performed.

Philadelphia, Jan. 1810.



FROM THE MIRROR OF TASTE.

Dec. 6th, Douglas	Young Norval,	} By Master Payne.
8th, Mountaineers	Octavian,	
9th, Lover's Vows	Frederick,	
11th, Mahomet	Zaphna,	
13th, Hamlet	Hamlet,	
15th, Pizarro	Rolla,	
16th, Douglas	Young Norval,	
18th, Tancred and Sigis- munda	Tancred,	
20th, Barbarossa	Selim,	
22d, Romeo and Juliet, for his own benefit	Romeo,	

All those plays are well known. From the peculiar circumstances attending their performance, they

call for a share of particular attention, which would otherwise be superfluous. Where there is something new, and much to be admired, it would be inexcusable to be niggard of our labour, even were the labour painful, which in this instance it is not. The performance of Master Payne pleased us so much, that we have often since derived great enjoyment from the recollection of it; and to retrace upon paper the opinions with which it impressed us, we now sit down with feelings very different from those, which, at one time, we expected to accompany the task. Without the least hesitation we confess, that when we were assured it would become our duty to examine that young gentleman's pretensions, and compare his sterling value with the general estimate of it, as reported from other parts of the Union, we felt greatly perplexed. On one hand, strict critical justice, with the pledge which is given in our motto, imperiously forbidding us to applaud him who does not deserve it, stared us in the face with a peremptory inhibition from sacrificing truth to ceremony, or prostrating our judgment before the feet of public prejudice: while, on the other, we were aware that nothing is so obstinate as error—that fashionable idolatry is of all things the most incorrigible by argument, and the least susceptible of conviction—that while the dog-star of favouritism is vertical over a people, there is no reasoning with them to effect; and that all the efforts of common sense are but given to the wind, if employed to undeceive them, till the brain fever has spent itself, and the public mind has settled down to a state of rest. We had heard Master Payne's performances spoken of in a style which quite overset our faith. Not one with whom we conversed about him, spoke within the

bounds of reason : few indeed seemed to understand the subject, or, if they did, to view it with the sober eye of plain common rationality. The opinions of some carried their own condemnation in their obvious extravagance; and hyperbolical admiration fairly ran itself out of breath, in speaking of the wonders of this cisatlantic young Roscius.

While we knew that half of what was said was utterly impossible, we thought it due to candour to believe, that such a general opinion could not exist without some little foundation; that in all likelihood the boy had merit, considerable for his years and means, to which his puerility might have given a peculiar recommendation, and that when he came to be unloaded by time and public reflection, of that injurious burthen of idolatrous praise, which, to our thinking, had all the bad effects of calumny, we should be able to find at bottom, something that could be applauded without impairing our veracity, deceiving the public, or joining the multitude in burning the vile incense of flattery under the boy's nose, and hiding him from the world and from himself in a cloud of pernicious adulation.

But how to encounter this reigning humour, was the question : to render his reasoning efficacious, the critic must take care not to make it unpalatable. And here the general taste seemed to be in direct opposition to our reason and experience; for we had not yet (even in the case of young Betty, with the aggregate authority of England, Ireland, and Scotland in his favour) been free from scepticism : the Roscio-mania contagion had not yet infected us quite so much : in a word, we had no faith in *miracles*, nor could we, in either the one case or the other, screw up our credulity to any sort of

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unison with the pitch of the multitude. We shall not readily forget the mixed sensations of concern and risibility with which, day after day, from the first annunciation of Master Payne's expected appearance at Philadelphia, we were obliged to listen to the misjudging applause of his panegyrists. There is a narrowness of heart, and a nudity of mind, too common in our nature, under the impulse of which few people can bring themselves to do homage to one person without magnifying their incense by the depreciation of some other. According to these, a favourite has not his proper station, till all others are put below him; as if there was no merit positive, but all was good but by comparison. In this temper there certainly is at least as much malice to one as kindness to the other: but an honourable and beneficent wisdom gives other laws for human direction, and dictates, that in the house of merit there are not only many stories, but many apartments in each story; and that every man may be fairly adjudicated in all the praise he deserves, without thrusting others down into the ground floor to make room for him. Yet not one in twenty could we find to praise Master Payne, without doing it at the expence of others. "He is superior to Cooper," said one; "He speaks better than Fennell," said a second: these sagacious observations too, are rarely accompanied by a modest qualification, such as, "I think," or "it is my opinion," but nailed down with a peremptory *is*. This is the mere naked offspring of a muddy or unfinished mind, which, for want of discrimination to point out the particular beauties it affects to admire, accomplishes its will by a sweeping wholesale term of comparison, more injurious to him they praise than to him they slight. Nay, so far has

this been carried, that some who never were out of the limits of this Union, have, by a kind of telescopic discernment, viewed Cooke and Kemble in comparison with their new favourite, and found them quite deficient. We cannot readily forget one circumstance: a person said to another in our hearing at the play-house, "You have been in England, Sir, don't you think Master Payne superior to young Betty?" "I don't know, Sir, having never seen Master Betty," answered the man. "I think he is very much superior," replied the former. "You have seen Master Betty then, Sir," said the latter. "No, I never did," returned he that asked the first question; "but I am sure of it—I have heard a person that was in England say so!" This was the pure effusion of a mind subdued to prostration by wonder. In England this was carried to such lengths, that the panegyrists of young Betty seemed to vie with each other in fanatical admiration of that truly extraordinary boy. One, in a public print, went so far as to assert, that Mr. Fox, (who, as well as Mr. Pitt, was at young Betty's benefit, when he played Hamlet) declared the performance was little, if at all, inferior to that of his deceased friend Garrick. With the very same breath in which we read the paragraph, we declared it to be a falsehood. Mr. Fox had too much judgment to institute the comparison—Mr. Fox had too much benignity to utter such a malicious libel upon that noble boy.

These considerations naturally augmented our anxiety, and we did most heartily wish, if it were possible, to be relieved from the task of giving an opinion of Master Payne. For in addition to his youthfulness, we knew that he wanted many advantages which young Betty possessed. The infant Roscius of England, had,

from his very infancy, been in a state of the best discipline; being from the time he was five years of age, daily exercised in recitation of poetry, by his mother, who shone in private theatricals; and having been afterwards prepared for the stage, and hourly tutored by Mr. Hough, an excellent preceptor. By his father, too, who is one of the best fencers in Europe, he was improved in gracefulness of attitude—and Nature had uncommonly endowed him for the reception of those instructions. Of such means of improvement Master Payne was wholly destitute, for there was not a man that we could hear of in America, who was at once capable and willing to instruct him. Self-dependent and self-taught as he must be, we could see no feasible means by which he could evolve his powers, be they what they might, to adequate effect for the stage. We deemed it scarcely possible that he could have got rid of the innumerable provincialisms which must cling to his youth: and we laid our account at the best, with meeting a fine forward boy who could speak, perhaps not very well either, by rote; and taking the most prominent favourite actor of his day as a model, be a mere childish imitator. We considered that when young people do any thing with an excellence disproportioned to their years, they are viewed through a magnifying medium; and that being once seen to approach to the perfection of eminent adults, they are, by a transition sufficiently easy to a wandering mind, readily concluded to excel them. Thus Betty was said to surpass Kemble and Cooke; and thus young Payne was roundly asserted to surpass Cooper and Fennell. Such were the feelings and opinions with which we met Master Payne on his first appearance, for which the tragedy of Douglas was judiciously

selected; and we own that the first impression he made upon our minds was favourable to his talents, in this way: he appeared to be just of that age which we should think least advantageous to him; too young to enforce approbation by robust manly exertion of talents; too far advanced, to win over the judgment by tenderness; or by a manifest disproportion between his age and his efforts, to excite that astonishment which, however short-lived, is, while it lasts, despotic over the understanding. Labouring, therefore, under most of the disadvantages without any of the advantages of puerility, candour and common sense pronounced at once, that much less of the estimation in which he was held, was to be ascribed to his boyishness, and of course, much more to his talents, than we had been led to imagine. If, therefore, he got through the character handsomely, and still carried the usual applause along with him, we directly conceived that there would be just ground for thinking it not entirely the result of prejudice, nor by any means undeserved.

At his entrance he seemed a little intimidated; as if he were dubious of his reception; nor could he for some minutes divest himself of that feeling, though he was received with the most flattering welcome. This transient perturbation gave a very pleasing effect to his first words; and when he said, "My name is Norval," he uttered it with a pause, which seemed to be the effect of the modest diffidence natural to such a character, upon being introduced into a higher presence than he had ever before approached. Had this been the effect of art, it would have been fine—perhaps it was—but we thought it was accidental.

The utter impossibility of a beardless boy of sixteen or seventeen years, at all assimilating to the character

of a warrior, and mighty slayer of men, is of itself an insuperable obstacle to the complete *personification* of certain characters by a young gentleman of the age and stature of Master Payne. He might speak them with strict propriety—he might act them with feeling and spirit; but had he the general genius of Garrick—the energies of Mossop—the beauty of Barry—the elocution of Sheridan—and the art of Kemble, he could not, with the feminine face and voice, and the unfinished person inseparable from such tender years, *personate* them: nor so long as he is seen or heard, can the perception of his nonage be excluded, or he be thought to represent that character, to the formation of which, not gristle, nor fair, round, soft lineaments, but huge bones and muscle, well-knit joints, knotty limbs, and the hard face of Mars are necessary. If we find, as we do in many great works of criticism, objections made to the performance of several characters by actors of high renown, merely for their deficiency in personal appearance—if the externals of Mr. Garrick are stated by his warmest panegyrists, as unfitting him for characters of dignity or heroism, even to his exclusion from Falconbridge, Hotspur, &c. and if we find that the greatest admirers of Barry, considered the harmony and softness of his features, as reducing his *Macbeth*, *Pierre*, &c. to poor lukewarm efforts, how can it be expected that a boy, just started from childhood, should present a true picture of a warrior or philosopher? We premise this for the purpose of having it understood, that what we are to say of Master Payne, is to be subject to these deductions, and that in the praise which it is but just to bestow upon him, we exclude all idea of external resemblance to the characters. Of the mental powers, the informing spirit, the genius,

the feeling which he now discloses, and the rich promise they afford of future greatness—of these it is, we profess to speak. Further we cannot go without insincerity, untruth, and manifest absurdity.

As might have been expected from Master Payne's limited means of stage instruction, he several times discovered want of judgment. In the speech in which Norval tells his story, he trespassed on propriety in his efforts to throw an air of martial ardour into his expressions; by suddenly changing the key and raising the tone of his voice, and speaking with increased rapidity the words that more immediately related to fighting, erecting them into a kind of *alto relievo* above the level of the rest; particularly in "I had heard of battles," &c. "We fought and conquered," &c. all which is a narrative that should be delivered with humility, and a strict avoidance of any thing like vain glory, or egotism, studiously softening down, with modest air, those details of his own prowess which the author has *necessarily* given to the character.

Had Master Payne had a Hough to instruct him, or a Cooke for his model, he would have escaped the error into which he fell, in that part of the fourth act, in which Norval describes the Hermit who instructed him: he would have known, that acting what he narrates is highly improper—indeed absurd; as it is acting in the first person, and speaking in the third, at one and the same time. While he repeated the words,

" — cut the figures of the marshall'd hosts,
" Describ'd the motions, and explain'd the use
" Of the deep column, and the lengthened line,
" The square, the crescent, and the phalanx firm,"

Master Payne cut those figures, and described the square and the crescent with his hands—a great error! A

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better lesson cannot be offered to a young actor, on this subject, than may be found in the Novel of *Peregrine Pickle*, in which Doctor Smollett ridicules Quin the player, for acting narrative in *Zanga*.

Master Payne would find it his interest to avoid as much as may be, long, declamatory speeches, till his organs are enlarged and confirmed. But in those parts in which Douglas discloses his lofty spirit, and no less in all the pathetic parts, he far exceeded expectation, and deserved all the applause he received.

" Oh! tell me who, and where my mother is:

" Oppress'd by a base world, perhaps she bends

" Beneath the weight of other ills than grief,

" And, desolate, implores of Heaven the aid

" Her son should give. O tell me her condition!"

There was, in his delivery of these lines, an expression of tenderness which appealed forcibly to the heart, and was rendered still more striking by the abrupt transition to his sword—

" Can the sword—

" Who shall resist me in a parent's cause?"

Which he executed with a felicity that nothing but consummate genius could accomplish. Again he blazed out with *the true spirit* in the following lines:

" The blood of Douglas will protect itself—

" Then let yon false Glenalvon beware of me."

That part, however, in which he disclosed not only exquisite feeling, but a soundness of judgment that would do honour to an experienced actor, was where Glenalvon taunts him, for the purpose of rousing his spirit to resentment. In that speech particularly, which begins,

" Sir, I have been accustom'd all my days

" To hear and speak the plain and simple truth"—

The suppression of his indignation in this and the succeeding passages—the climax of passion marked in his face, his tone, and his action, when he says to himself,

“ If this were told !”

The gradation thence to,

“ Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?”

Till at last he flames into ungovernable rage, in

“ Did I not fear to freeze thy shallow valour,

“ And make thee sink too soon beneath my sword,

“ I'd tell thee—what thou art—I know thee well !”

was altogether a string of beauties, such as it rarely falls to the lot of the Critic to commemorate. Had age and personal hardihood been added, it would have defied the cavils of the most churlish criticism, and deprived even enmity of all pretence to censure.

The next striking beauty he disclosed, was in his reply to Randolph, when the latter offers his arbitration between him and Glenalvon :

“ Nay, my good lord, though I revere you much,

“ My cause I plead not, nor demand your judgment.”

The cold peremptory dignity he threw into these words was beautifully conceived, and executed in a masterly manner: nor was he less successful in the transition to an expression of poignant but smothered sensibility in the next line:

“ I blush to speak : I will not, cannot speak,

“ Th' opprobrious words that I from him have borne.”

His delivery of this and all the other lines of the speech that followed it, deserved the thunders of applause with which it was greeted—it was, indeed, admirable.

In impassioned feeling lies Master Payne's strength. Hence his last scene was deeply affecting; though we could well have spared that *Kembleian* dying trope, his rising up and falling again. It is because we seriously respect Master Payne's talents, that we make this remark: clap-traps and stage-trick of every kind, cannot be too studiously avoided by persons of real genius.

It would be injustice to omit one passage—

“ Just as my arm had master'd Randolph's sword,

“ The villain came behind me—*But I slew him!*”

In the break, the pause, and the last four words, he was inimitably fine.

In Master Payne's performance of this character we perceived many faults, which call for his own correction. They are, we think, such as he has it in his power to get rid of. As they are general, and pervade all his performances, we reserve all our observations upon them till we close the course of criticism we are to bestow upon him, when we mean to sum up our opinion of his general talents. Meantime we beg leave to remind him, that Mr. Garrick himself, after he had been near forty years upon the stage, often shut himself up for days together, restudying and rehearsing parts he had acted with applause a hundred times before. *Sat sapienti.*

Nature has bestowed upon this young gentleman a countenance of no common order. Its expression has not yet unfolded itself; but we entertain no doubt, that when manhood and diligent professional exercise shall have brought the muscles of his face into full relief, and strengthened its lines, it will be powerfully capable of all the inflexions necessary for a general

player. At present, the character of his physiognomy is perfectly discernible only upon a near view. When he advances towards the front of the stage, the lines may be perceived from that part of the pit and boxes which are near the orchestra ; even then the shades are so very much softened by youth, and the parts so rounded, and so utterly free from acute angles, that they can, as yet, but faintly express strong, turbulent emotions, or display the furious passions. In a boy of his age, this, so far from being a defect, is a beauty, the reverse of which would be unnatural ; and if it were a defect, every day that passes over his head would remedy it. What is now wanting in muscular expression, is in a great measure supplied by his eye, which glows with animation and intelligence, and at times *speaks* the language of a soul really impassioned. Upon a close view, when apart from the factitious aids and incumbrances of stage-lights, costume, and paint, he must be a shallow-sighted physiognomist who would not at the first glance be struck by Master Payne's countenance. A more extraordinary mixture of softness and intelligence never were associated in a human face. The forehead is particularly fine. Lavater would say that genius and energy were enthroned there ; and over the whole, though yet quite boyish, there is a strong expression of what is called manliness ; by which is to be understood, not present, but the indications of future manliness. How strongly and distinctly this is characterized in the boy's face, may be collected from an anecdote which, exclusive of its application to this subject, we think well worth relating, on account of the other party concerned in it.

A day or two before Master Payne left Philadel-

phia, he and a friend of his walking in a remote part of the city, were encountered by a strange old woman, who requested alms with an earnestness which exacted attention. The gentleman who was in company with our youth, and from whom we deliver the story, being an Irishman, instantly recognizing in the petitioner, an unhappy countrywoman, stopped, surveyed her with more than cursory regard, and put his hand into his pocket in order to give her money. As there was in her aspect that which bespoke something that had once been better accommodated, and had claims above a common mendicant, he was searching in his pocket for a suitable piece of silver, when the generous boy, outstripping him, put unostentatiously, into the old lady's hand some pieces of silver. She viewed them—drew back—gazed upon him for some seconds with a fixed look of wonder, delight, and affection, then lifting up her eyes to heaven, in a tone of voice, and with a solemnity which no words can express, exclaimed, “May the great God of Heaven shower
“down his blessings on your INFANT YEARS AND
“MANLY FACE!” Quickness of conception beyond all other people is now allowed even by the English, to be characteristic of the people of Ireland, once considered by those of the sister kingdom as the Bæotians of Britain; and we are disposed to concur with the Irish gentleman, who, in his exultation and honest prejudice said, “that the woman might be known to be Irish from
“her warm gratitude, her quick discernment, and
“her elegant extemporaneous compliment.” In fact, if Edmund Burke himself, who exceeded all mankind in the quickness and elegance of complimentary replies, had been considering the matter a whole hour, he could not have uttered any thing to surpass it.

: Of Master Payne's person, we cannot speak (nor do we hope) so favourably as of his face. And we much fear that he will not be allowed to undergo the pain of mending it by abstinence from indulgence. Early hours, active or even hard exercise, particularly of the gymnastic kind, and diligent unremitting study, are as indispensable to his fame, if he means to be a player, as food or drink are to his support. In general his action is elegant—his attitudes bold and striking; but of the former he sometimes uses too much, and in his appropriation of the latter, he is not always sufficiently discriminating. This was particularly observable in his performance of Frederick, in *Lovers' Vows*—a character in which we shall have occasion to speak of him, and with great praise, in a future number. His walk too, which in his own unaffected natural gait is not exceptionable, he frequently spoils by a kind of pushing step, at open war with dignity of deportment. It would be well for this young gentleman if he had never seen Mr. Cooper. Perhaps he will be startled at this; and flatters himself that he never imitates that gentleman. We can readily conceive him to think so, even at the moment he is doing it. To imitate another, it is not necessary to intend to do so. Every day of their lives, men imitate without the intervention of the will. The manners of an admired, or much-observed individual, insensibly root themselves in a young person's habits—he draws them into his system, as he does the atmosphere which surrounds him. We doubt very much whether Mr. Cooper himself would not be surprised, if he knew how much he imitates Kemble. Though seemingly a paradox, we firmly rely upon it—Mr. Cooper *may* be aiming at Cooke, when he is by old habitual taint really hitting Kemble. On this

subject of imitation much is to be said. Kemble rose when every bright luminary of the stage had set. Being the best of his day, in the metropolis, he has become the standard of acting to the young and inexperienced. More from pride than want of judgment, he goes wrong. His system of acting is radically vicious; but as it makes labour pass as a substitute for genius, by transferring expression from its natural organs to the limbs, and making attitude and action the chief representatives of the passions and the feelings, it not only fascinates because it catches the eye, but is adopted because extremely convenient to the vast majority of young adventurers on the stage, who, possessing neither the feelings fit for the profession, nor the organs, nor the genius to express them if they had, are glad to find a substitute for both. Hence the system of Mr. Kemble has spread like a plague—infected the growing race of actors, mixed itself with the very life-blood of the art, and extended its contagion through every new branch, even to the very last year's buds. Thus Mr. Kemble is imitated by those who never saw him. Let us tell Master Payne, that it is the very worst school he could go to, this of the statuary. It is as much inferior to the old one—to that of Garrick, Barry, Mossop, and Nature, as the block of marble from which the Farnesian Hercules was hewed, is to the god himself. Of its superiority we need urge no further proof than that of Mr. Cooke, who, though assuredly inferior to several of the old stock, and groaning under unexampled intemperance, has, in spite of every impediment which artful jealousy and envy of his talents could raise against him, risen so high in public estimation, that even when just reeking from offences which would not have been endured in

Garrick or Barry, his return is hailed with shouts, as if it were a national triumph. And why? because he is of the old school, and scorns the cajolery of statue-attitude and stage-trick.

We speak thus freely to Master Payne, because we think he has talents worth the interposition of criticism, and if we speak at all, must speak the whole truth. The praise we give him might well be distrusted, if from any false delicacy we slurred over his defects and errors. The most dangerous rock in his way will be adulation. Sincerely we wish him to be assured, that those who mix their applause with a proper alloy of censure, are his best friends. Indiscriminate flatterers are no better than the snake which besmears its prey with slime, only to gorge it the more easily.

On reviewing what we have written, we find no observation on Master Payne's voice, in which nature has been very bountiful to him. We heard him a few times, with no little pain, strain it out of its compass. He need not do so; since, judiciously managed; it is equal to all the purposes of his profession. Those are dangerous experiments, by which he may spoil a voice naturally clear, melodious, and of tolerable compass. His pronunciation is at times hurtful to a very nice ear. He is not to imagine that he has spoken as he ought, when he has uttered words as they are pronounced in general conversation. There are some, and high ones too, who will say "good boy," when they mean "good bye;" and it would not be at all impossible to hear a very fine lady say, that she was daown in taown, to buy a gaown. We do not accuse Master Payne of this; but at times a little of the s-cheats the o of its good old round rights; so dis-

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tantly, however, as not to be noticed, except by a very accurate ear—but he ought not to let *any ear* discover it.

To the correct orthoepist, several persons on the stage give offence in the pronunciation of the pronoun possessive *my*—speaking it in all cases with the full open *y*, as it would rhyme to *fly*, which should only be when it is put in contradistinction to *thy* or *his*, or any other pronoun possessive: in all other cases it should be sounded like *me*. This is a pure Americanism, not practised in any other place where the English language is spoken, and, so far as it goes, deprives the word of a quality of nice distinctness.

It gives us great pleasure to communicate to our readers the intelligence, that Mr. Payne's success at Richmond, Virginia, even surpassed that which he had met before. From a letter submitted to our perusal, we have, with permission, made the following extract.

“ Wednesday night Payne arrived; Thursday was
“ the first day of his performance; the other nights,
“ being Saturday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday,
“ Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, when the house
“ closed for the season; and on Sunday he departed
“ in the mail stage. This flying visit (of ten days
“ only) produced him upwards of *seventeen hundred*
“ *dollars!*”

Philadelphia, Feb. 1810.



FROM THE SAME.

MASTER PAYNE'S PERFORMANCES.

OF the characters represented by this young gentleman, those in which he evinced the greatest powers

are Douglas, Tancred, and Romeo, while that in which he is least exceptionable, is Frederick in *Lovers' Vows*. In his *Octavian*, which followed next after Douglas, some of the pathetic passages were beautifully expressed. Mrs. Inchbald, in her prefatory remarks to the play of the *Mountaineers*, says, *This "true lover requires such peculiar art, such consummate skill in the delineation, that it is probable " his representative may have given an impression of " the whole drama unfavourable to the author. Nor " is this a reproach to the actor who fails; for such a " person as Octavian would never have been created, " had not Kemble been born some years before him. " But, notwithstanding the difference of their ages, " it is likely they will both depart this life at the same " time."* While the difficulty of delineating *Octavian*, and the merit of a living performer of it are such, that it is scarcely possible to think of the play without thinking of Kemble, it has so happened, that scarcely any character has been attempted by so many actors of all qualities—nor is there one in which so few have come off with actual disgrace. Men who could scarcely be endured in third or fourth-rate parts, have selected *Octavian* to figure in, on their benefit nights. One man, who was laughed at in every other character, was supposed, by a misjudging audience, to play *Octavian* well; nay, to our knowledge, was preferred to Hodgkinson and Cooper in it. The reason is plain: to the pouring of madness, the injudicious can imagine no limits. The more a madman raves and roars, the better; rags, slovenliness, and matted hair, and beard too, are the usual associates of awkwardness and vulgarity. Any man, therefore, who can rant and play the extravagant, no matter how ungrace-

fully, may pass with some audiences for a very natural Octavian—an abominable absurdity! For these two reasons, Octavian is a very hazardous part for a performer who aims at substantial fame, to attempt. In Master Payne's performance of it, there was no extravagance to censure; nothing that had the least tendency to enrol him among the bedlamite butchers of the character; nor was there, on the other hand, a complete uniform delineation of Octavian to afford him the same rank in that, which criticism willingly allows him in some other characters.

Not so Frederick, his performance of which was one consistent piece of natural, affecting, and skilful acting. In the scenes of filial tenderness, with his mother, and in the solemn, but spirited remonstrances with the Baron Wildenheim, he displayed such equal excellence, that criticism might incur the charge of injustice, by giving the preference to either. The character, as Master Payne acted it, was made up by him, from the two antecedent translations of Mrs. Inchbald, and Mr. Thompson;—by a union of both of which, this youth has produced a better acting play, than either. He lately published it at Baltimore, with an advertisement prefixed, written by himself, to which we refer our readers, with a strong recommendation to them to peruse it.

In the characters selected by Master Payne, there are but four, which we can think judiciously chosen. For the whole selection, we should find it difficult to account, if we did not know that they had before been chosen for Master Betty, by thus closely walking in the steps of whom, Master Payne has, in our opinion, wronged himself. It is evident, that in choosing characters for the infant Roscius of England, his instruc-

tors had it more in view to exhibit the boy as a prodigy, than the characters well acted. The people were to be treated to an anomalous exhibition, and the greater the anomaly the better the treat. What, but a determination to inflame public curiosity to the highest pitch by a contrast, as absurd as unnatural, could have induced them to put forward a little boy of twelve years old, in the formidable tyrant Richard? Like modern composers of music, their object was not to produce harmony or natural sweetness, but to execute difficulties. As the actor was a boy, loitering on the verge of childhood, the plan, if not correct, was at least politic. But the public do not look on Master Payne in that light, and therefore, he ought to have selected parts more suitable to his time of life and talents. Parts calculated to aid and not depress him. What judicious actor is there now living, who would not think it injurious to him, to be put forward by a Manager, in Selim or in Zaphna? The united powers of Mossop in Barbarossa, and Garrick in Selim, could barely keep that play alive. We have seen Mossop play it to a house of not ten pounds, though aided by the first Zaphira in the world, Mrs. Fitzhenry. From either of those characters, Master Payne could not derive the least aid. His Hamlet we put out of the question—we did not see it.

On his *Tancred* we can dwell with very different sensations; considering the materials he had to work upon, his delineation of the character was highly creditable to his talents. For the love part, little more can be done by a good actor, than by a good reader; as poetry, it is soft, and sweet, and flowing; as a practical representation of that passion, it is mawkish: yet, in the performance of Master Payne, it was not

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entirely destitute of interest. In all the rest; in every scene with Siffredi, particularly in his warm expostulations with the honest, but mistaken old statesman; in his subsequent indignation and despair; in his lofty bearing and menaces to Osmond, and thence onward to his death, he was truly excellent, seemed perfect master of the scene, and in depicting the tumult of passions which struggle in the bosom of the lordly *Tancred*, evinced that he possesses the legitimate genius, and true spirit that should inform the actor.

For his benefit he personified *Romeo*. The house was so crowded, and in all places that were accessible after the doors were opened, there was so much pressing, confusion, ill-mannered noise and struggle, and rudeness, that few but those who had places taken in the front boxes, could see or hear the play out. From the upper gallery, where with difficulty we at last got a seat, we indistinctly saw what passed on the stage, and could hear a little by snatches. What we did hear and see, induced us to lament our not bearing and seeing more, and to wish that we may speedily have another opportunity of witnessing a performance respecting which there is but one opinion, and that highly favourable to Master Payne's reputation.

Philadelphia, March, 1810.



FROM THE MIRROR OF TASTE.

MASTER PAYNE.

FROM some English papers now in our possession, we find that the fame of this young gentleman has already reached Europe; in such sort too, as in all probability will ensure him a very favorable reception there,

if he should be disposed to try the experiment. Even at this time, the intercourse between the two countries is such, that nothing worthy of notice passes in one, without being soon known in the other. English gentlemen who were lately in America, spoke on their return to London, in such terms of Master Payne's performances, as if they thought he would eclipse young Betty. However, we hope that the justice of his own country will prevent the necessity of merit such as his, seeking encouragement in strange and distant lands.

Philadelphia, May, 1810.



FROM THE PORT-FOLIO.

PERMIT, Mr. Editor, one of your correspondents to express the gratification he has felt in attending the theatre during the nights of Mr. Payne's engagement. I had reason, particularly, to admire the wonderful facility and adroitness by which self was lost in the character personated. In other actors, I have seen an occasional recurrence of this conception, when some favorite passage was to be spoken. When this was done, they were no longer the characters they acted, until another brilliant speech was to be made, when they seemed to assume the disguise solely for that purpose. Such conduct breaks that continuity of sensation, so requisite to make us feel the whole force of the author's sentiments, and prompts our memories to hover round mutilated passages only. The person speaking does not preserve his identity by his words and actions, it is his habiliments only that designate the character he acts. That integrity of conception, that enables him to bear the character throughout, Mr. Payne possesses in a very eminent degree. When he

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is silent, an "expression of eye or of countenance," "fills up the chasm," and he appears to wait with impatience for the time when he shall give his thoughts utterance again. By this happy accommodation, the most unimportant passage in the speaker's discourse, partakes of character and identity; and the author's sentiments are literally embodied. The audience are thus gradually prepared for that burst of frenzied laughter, with which they hear the death of *Hermione* :

" I thank you, Gods! I never could expect
To be so wretched.—You have been industrious
To finish your decrees, and make *Orestes*
A dreadful instance of your power to punish."

We are likewise prepared to see the same character, when driven to insanity, exclaim, while wrapping his head with his mantle—

" Look! where they come!
A shoal of furies, how they swarm about me!"

This brought to my recollection the fine lines of *Virgil* :

" Aut *Agamemnonius* scenis agitatus *Orestes*,
Armata facibus matrem, et serpentibus atris,
Cum fugit, ultricesque sedent in limine *Diræ*."

This continuity of character so happily preserved, enables the actor to make the sentiments of his author the thermometer of his looks, language, and actions. The passion and interest before excited and preserved, as the catastrophe deepens, allows still additional energy, without overstepping the boundaries of nature; whereas, when the actor flags, all our sympathies collapse, and even proper stress laid upon passages distinguished for their energy, appears in that state of exhaustion, like cold and unmeaning rant: for we cannot conceive what should make him so sud-

denly rouse and relax from his efforts. An actor, who knows his business, never will forget the necessity of exciting our sympathies in the first place, or of preserving the impression so excited, by reiterated efforts afterwards. Notwithstanding, Dr. Johnson asserted of David Garriek, that "if he did really believe himself to be Richard the Third, he ought to be hanged every time he performed the play;" unless a portion of this credulity does reside in the bosom of an actor, he does not do his author complete justice. It is hypercriticism to argue philosophically on the greater or less degree of pliancy inherited by the passions; it is something constitutional; something inherent in nature; something too subtle to be grasped by the cold and frost-bitten fingers of metaphysic enquiry. Dr. Johnson was no judge of such matters, and his own tragedy of Irene, is proof positive, and recorded, that nature did not design him for such a critic. The Doctor pronounces such credulity impossible; but Mr. Payne has convinced me that such a thing is possible—nay, that such sentiments are for the time epidemic. "Deserves to be hanged!" Is there no medium between a glow and impression of character received for a particular occasion, and which expires with it, and that deliberate and murderous villainy that could perpetrate such enormities afterwards? Philosophers assume to themselves more credit by far than they are entitled to, by pushing every principle of this sort in *extremes*, and claiming to themselves all the glories of a victory, without having endured the hazard of a battle. Opinions of this sort do well enough for paradoxes, if they are deserving that dignity; but they are in sober truth entitled to no more. They go to the destruction of all the pains as well as

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pleasures of fictitious sympathy ; and a man would be interdicted from shedding a tear on reading a tale of fanciful distress.

Philadelphia, Feb. 1812.



FROM THE MIRROR OF TASTE.

Monday,	Dec. 9th, 1811,	Mountaineers, ..	Octavian,	} By Mr. Payne.
Wednesday,	11th,	Mahomet,	Zaphna,	
Friday,	13th,	Tancred and Si-	Tancred,	
		gismunda, .. }		
Saturday,	14th,	Douglas,	Douglas,	
Monday,	16th,	Hamlet,	Hamlet,	
Wednesday,	18th,	Pizarro,	Rolla,	
Friday,	20th,	Distrest Mother,	Orestes,	
Saturday,	21st,	Jane Shore,	Hastings,	
Monday,	23rd,	Alexander the } Great,	Alexander,	



MR. PAYNE.

Preliminary to entering upon the consideration of this gentleman's performance, on this his last visit to Philadelphia, we entreat our readers to turn to the criticism we delivered on his performances in the year 1810, in which our opinion of him is given so full, as to supersede the necessity of entering largely into the subject here. The only question to be discussed at this time is, whether he is so far improved as to justify the expectations we at that time avowed, or whether he has availed himself of the hints we then threw out—whether his voice is strengthened—his person grown more manly, and, on the whole, whether, as Mr. Payne, he is more entitled to public approbation, or more ca-

pable of affording pleasure to a rational audience now, than he was as Master Payne. To these questions we peremptorily answer in the affirmative. His person, though still short of the hero's mould or dimensions, is considerably bettered, and his walk and deportment are greatly improved : he has got rid of his Cooperisms, or insensible imitations of Cooper—the redundancy of attitude and action, of which we once took occasion to complain, are entirely laid aside, and the defective, pushing-forward step we adverted to in that critique, no longer injures his motions.

But it is in his conception of character, and his reading of particular passages, the time seems to have ripened him most into excellence. That genius, which he unquestionably possesses in a degree superior to any tragic actor on the American stage but Cooke, is now more controlled by judgment, and at the same time rendered more active and efficient by study. This we discovered in the striking originality, and peculiar felicity of manner he occasionally disclosed in each of the characters he performed. In his Octavian, there were some touches which to us appeared new ; too delicate, perhaps, to be recognized by the many, but not the less demonstrative of a genius shrewdly discriminating, and self-dependent. In Octavian, he differs from some that we “ have seen play, and heard others praise too,” and in our opinion, for the better.

Let us be understood :—We enter upon this subject fully aware of the deduction which may still be made, on account of his youthful appearance and inferiority to full-grown actors in size. But these very deficiencies exhibit the superiority of his genius. The superior corporeal execution of Mr. Cooper, gives to his performance a higher interest of a certain kind, while

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his conception is seldom comparable to Payne's, and his character is never so perfectly studied. Though Octavian was, for reasons we shall state hereafter, a very unfavourable character for him, above all, to make his *debut* in, yet even from his performance of it, we can cull a number of passages to exemplify the opinion we have advanced.

We will begin with his introductory soliloquy. Payne's Octavian is a man labouring under the derangement of a mind prostrated by melancholy, sometimes relieved by lucid intervals, and sometimes, though very seldom, starting into impassioned frenzy. On his first appearance, he enters with a disconsolate and wearied air: he does not at once, as some do, exhibit marks of frenzy, but in a tone of languor and disconsolation, expresses his misery at not being able to procure sleep,

" I can *not* sleep ;"

laying the emphasis on the word " not," which more forcibly marks a foregone, vain effort to procure rest, than the common reading, " I cannot *sleep*," with the emphasis on the last word. While in this state of lucid disconsolation, his brain seems gradually to take fire from the intensity of his feelings; his eye becomes wild, and his derangement is perceived to increase till he comes to the apostrophe to the

" —hot and rising sun."

This climax, which was enforced with great effect by an hysterical laugh, and the triumphant comparison of himself with the sun, as a new reading, was more ingenious than correct, and had a striking effect, though, we think, at the expence of propriety, and to the loss of the author's meaning.

We soon perceived that Mr. Payne had profited by his observations on Mr. Cooke; not in servile imitation of his speech and action in particular passages, but by adopting his general philosophy; connecting the parts of the dialogue by the comment of the eyes and deportment, which is the excellence that distinguishes Cooke from all other actors. The convulsive agitation of Payne's frame during the pause after the words,

"And that were pity,"

was well contrived as a precursor to the burst of pathos with which he uttered,

"—————O Octavian!

"Where are the times thy ardent nature painted,

"When fortune smil'd upon thy lusty youth,

"And all was sunshine!—Where the look'd-for years,

"Gaily bedeck'd with fancy's imagery,

"When the high blood ran frolic through thy veins,

"And boyhood made thee sanguine!"

In the third act, he applied this silent action, or by-play, with great felicity of effect. While Octavian listens to the Goatherd's story of his daughter, which bears a strong resemblance to that of Octavian himself, the horror which he silently expressed at the Goatherd's cruelty, in opposing his daughter's marriage to the man she loved, made the reason for that torrent of rage and indignation which succeeds, fully apparent to the audience. This method, for the idea of which he is, no doubt, indebted to Cooke, but which nothing but native genius could instruct him when and where so happily to apply, constitutes one great line of demarcation between great and ordinary acting, and in young performers ought to be especially commended,

and held up to others as an example. Any man of ordinary memory may speak what is set down for him with tolerable propriety; but it requires the spirit of a poet to anticipate and extend the conceptions of a poet, and this, when done in perfection, undoubtedly constitutes the supreme perfection of acting. This it was which gave Garrick the vast superiority he maintained over all other actors. Our readers who have seen Cooke perform Sir Pertinax, will readily call to mind an illustration of this truth, in his servile air and *booing* to the great, and his immediately drawing himself up with a supercilious frown when he comes to address his servants.

In the first scene between Octavian and Roque, the poet has fallen into a manifest absurdity: we mean in the supposition that the former could scan the face of the latter, so as to say,

“ Providence has slabbred it in haste;—

“ ’Tis one of her unmeaning compositions,” &c.

and yet not discover in it, the face of his beloved “ Floranthe’s follower,” who had often “ lifted up “ the latch, to give him admittance” to her :—and this absurdity we have seen heightened, by the performer’s glaring for some time at the old man. In his attempt to relieve the scene from this absurdity, Payne showed considerable address, and succeeded so well, that we cannot deny him the justice, nor ourselves the pleasure, to describe the manner of its accomplishment.

Roque enters, while Octavian is gazing passionately at the picture of Floranthe, his mind absorbed and his heart bursting, with the remembrance of his lost happiness. Roque says,

“ Seignior!—Seignior!”

Startled from his reverie by the sound of a voice, Octavian hastily conceals the picture in his bosom, and confounded, walks hastily to Roque, casts a transient look at him, then turns away, and relapses again into strong agitation, manifestly occasioned by the recurrence of Floranthe to his reflections. In this state he is, when Roque, after a pause, inquires,

"Do you remember my countenance?"

Payne's Octavian, as if angered at this second interruption of his dream, impatiently, but without deigning to turn his eye again, towards so unwelcome an intruder, replies, unconscious who he is speaking to,

"No!—Providence has slubbered it in haste:

"'Tis one of her unmeaning compositions

"She manufactures when she makes a gross.

"She'll form a million such,—and all alike—

"Then send them forth ashamed of her own work,

"And set no mark upon them.—Get thee gone."

Then crosses Roque, and without noticing him, walks up the stage. The deep, solemn, and firm tone with which *Payne* said,

"Roque, I do know thy errand!"

showed, (to borrow the language of *Quin* to *Mrs. Bellamy*), that the true spirit was in him—and for his restoration of the following beautiful passage, he merited the thanks, as well as applause of his audience.

"Tell me, old Roque, tell me, *Floranthe's* follower,

"Shall we not, when the midnight bell has toll'd,

"Beguile the drunken sacrist of his key,

"Then steal in secret up the church's aisle

"To scatter cypress on her monument?"

Payne's gradually drawing himself up from his

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kneeling posture, by means of Roque's hand, during the utterance of that speech, was not only happily conceived, but happily executed ; and his gesture, as if in the act of scattering cypress, though we dislike the practical illustration of any act that is described, as done, or to be done, was, considering the state of Octavian's mind, very characteristic. Touching upon this topic, reminds us that we owe it to Mr. Payne, to remark, that of all the actors we have had occasion to criticise, Payne is, with the exception of Hodgkinson, the least self-willed and obstinate, in resistance to the well-meant hints of Criticism, as he has, to his own palpable benefit, evinced. He has, in conformity to the hints in our first critique upon him, corrected most of the exceptionable parts of his acting, and we mean to point out some instances of this, when we come to investigate his Douglas.

There are many other passages in Mr. Payne's performance, of beauty and ingenuity equal to these, but the limits of this number will not permit us to specify them.

Philadelphia, Dec. 1811.

MR. PAYNE'S

PERFORMANCES IN NORFOLK, VIRGINIA.

FROM THE FEDERAL REPUBLICAN.

WE are pleased to find, that the celebrity of the amiable, and unfriended young gentleman, who delighted and astonished upon the Baltimore boards, is

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confirmed by every *debut* he makes elsewhere. Such uniform commendation in every change of place—such accumulated testimony to the excellence of his performance, extorted from strangers and unbribed critics, cannot be liable to the imputation of partiality, or a general [prejudice. The Herald, in particular, from which two of the subjoined notices are extracted, has been complained of, by the corps of Thespis, whether justly or otherwise we know not, as too caustic and indiscriminate, in its animadversions on the scene; but on this occasion it will be obvious, that severity having no room for displaying itself, justice reigns in the admiration expressed, with so much enthusiasm of a performer, whom youth, and the influence of rivalry, would doom to obscurity, if by the sublimity of his talents, and the liberality of managers, he had not mounted into notice.

We are not so absurd as to believe, that his performance is not improveable. But what an exalted conception must we not anticipate of his exhibitions, mellowed and improved as they will be when the rough sketch—the first attempt, as it were, contains so many lines of beauty, and so many embryo perfections.

Baltimore, June 22, 1810.



FROM THE NORFOLK HERALD OF THE 13TH INST.

MASTER PAYNE.

WE have not room to notice at length, this young gentleman's performance last evening—suffice it to say, that expectation was outstripped, and the repeated

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plaudits given him by the audience, served to shew that satisfaction was enjoyed to its fullest extent.—We wish him health and prosperity.



FROM THE LEDGER OF THE SAME DATE.

LAST evening Master Payne made his first appearance at our Theatre, in the character of *Norval*. The fame of this young gentleman had preceded him; and consequently high expectations were raised. We believe few, if any, were disappointed: his performance of the character was so judicious, as to command the strict attention, and to gain the warm approbation of the audience. We shall not attempt a minute examination of the theatrical talents of Master Payne, because they have been the subject of examination in other places where he has performed, and their remarks upon them, copied into this paper. There is no part of this young gentleman's performance, that more commanded our attention and applause, than the relation which he maintained with the audience; after his first entrance, and modestly saluting the company, he appeared ever after to forget them, and was wholly engaged with his own, and the other characters of the piece—no turning to the audience, and breaking off abruptly, in the most interesting part of an interesting speech, to thank the audience for applause—No ogling with the boxes as he came on, or went off the stage—Many good performers are spoiled by an indulgence in these habits. Master Payne is to make his appearance to-morrow evening in the character of *Rolla*.

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FROM THE NORFOLK HERALD, DATED THE 15TH.

PIZARRO, AND THE PURSE.

MASTER PAYNE'S second appearance in the character of *Rolla*, did no injury to the fame which, by his *debut* on Tuesday evening, he so justly acquired. He surpassed all expectations. The squeamish may cavil at his puerile dimensions and tone of voice, as not comporting with the stately, masculine figure, and grave, dignified utterance of the Peruvian hero; but these objections should vanish when we behold him in the most animating scenes—Such fire and expression; such graceful and natural routine of action! If time would permit, we would enlarge upon this young gentleman's performance—Suffice it for the present, that the lovers of the drama could ~~not~~ possibly receive a higher gratification than in beholding it.



FROM THE NORFOLK LEDGER.

ON Monday evening the tragedy of Mahomet, for the benefit of Master Payne, was performed at our theatre, and to the most crowded audience we remember ever to have seen. It was pleasing to the friends of genius and merit, to perceive them so liberally patronised.

Norfolk, June 27, 1810.

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FROM THE NORFOLK HERALD.

MASTER PAYNE.

MONDAY evening last, closed Master Payne's engagement with the Norfolk theatre. From his *debut* we announced ourselves his friends, and with his *exit* he will carry our best wishes for his prosperity. Young Payne has a prospect before him, which we know his intuitive genius will readily embrace. His talents, verging to sublimity, have drawn from obscurity those juvenile sparks, which, by a proper cultivation, may enable him to arrive at the acmè of fame. His youth, preventing that rivalry, which would accompany maturer age, leaves the stage uncontrolled and completely under his sway. He will know how to appreciate those advantages; emulation must excite him onwards; and when he becomes the perfect son of Thespis, America will exult in the production of such a genius, demonstrating that her soil is not poor in talent, but that a genial influence presides over some of her young plants.

The encouragement given Master Payne, reflects honour on the taste and philanthropy of Norfolk; for on the one hand they were gratified in their expectation, whilst on the other they dealt bounteously to an unprotected youth. His benefit marked the estimation in which he was held. The boxes and even gallery, were occupied by beauty collected from the Borough, Portsmouth, and the adjacent counties; and if we estimate his audience at six hundred, we rather diminish than add to the number. All was praise; each member of the company appeared to participate in the applause Master Payne received; and a new spur ex-

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cited them above the powers they generally display. Mahomet may have been an *impostor*, but we assure the distant friends of Master Payne, that in his representation of *Zaphna*, no *imposition* was practised.

Norfolk, June 22, 1810.



MR. PAYNE'S
PERFORMANCES IN PETERSBURG, VIRGINIA.



FROM THE INTELLIGENCER.

PRECEDED by a fame, as loud as it was honourable, Master Payne, has at length arrived at Petersburg, and on our boards has amply proven that his celebrity did not flow from the whim, or from the pity of those before whom he had displayed his theatric powers. Without one thought on his green years, without attempting a cold prediction of what time may ripen him into, we fearlessly pronounce him, with one solitary exception, the most finished actor we have ever seen. With a mind capable of seizing the most mysterious beauties of his author, with a voice pleasingly adapted to the conveyance of the varied emotions that arise and agitate him, and with a gesture at once graceful and appropriate, that seem to speak the feelings language cannot pourtray, who is the spectator that is not an enthusiastic admirer? Who so cold, as to exclude from his heart the thrilling delight, such an harmonious display of scenic power might afford it, and quaintly ask for symmetry of shape—for an assemblage of personal attractions? It is an affectation of criticism—of an infallibility in judgment that we pretend not to have

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acquired, nor do we bow with much deference before it.

It must, however, be conceded, that Master Payne is not always equally great, but it is because he is not always equally attentive. He selects with unerring judgment, what are called the *good points* in his character, and gives them with so much force, with so much energy and beauty, that it is almost impossible that their excellencies should not be indelibly stamp'd upon the minds of his audience. He then appears to be satisfied until another great occasion calls forth a correspondent exertion. This trait in the performance of Master Payne, was particularly discernible in his representation of Young Norval, in which character he made his *debut*, when so much apathy was discovered on his first appearance, that we began to fear " 'twas youth had given him a name"—a few scenes, however, introduced us to his store of excellence, from which we have derived indescribable pleasure, and look to it as a rich source of future gratification. His Selim, in *Barbarossa*, last evening, did ample justice to our expectations, and we fancy the most fastidious were ardent to crown him with the wreath of praise.

We have to apologize to his brother performers, when we confess that our attentions were so exclusively bestowed upon the young candidate for fame, that we could not witness, and of course cannot reward their different merits—We could not, however, but be attracted "ever and anon," by vivid flashings from another quarter, which, if reserved for hours of more obscurity, would have completely illumined the surrounding scene. But for the circumstance we have mentioned, Mr. Young's Glenalvon must have called

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forth a flattering portion of attention and applause—we were much concerned he had no part in last evening's entertainments. The rest are our old acquaintance, and will pardon our unusual neglect. They will have a word from us before they are *all* ready.

Petersburg, July 5, 1805.



FROM THE NATIONAL INTELLIGENCER.

The citizens of Washington were on Monday gratified by the performance of Master Payne, in the character of *Tancred*, in Thomson's tragedy of *Tancred and Sigismunda*. This part was performed for his benefit, after the previous exhibition of *Norval* in Douglas, and *Frederick* in *Lovers' Vows*. In all these characters, notwithstanding the highly excited expectation of the public, he gave, as far as we can learn, universal satisfaction, of which, the crowded house on the last night, at such an unpropitious season, is the strongest evidence. Without attempting an analysis of the extraordinary powers of this promising candidate for fame, we may fearlessly say that, for his age, he has no competitor on the American boards; that he seizes the spirit of the character he personates with singular felicity; and, what is most surprising, is most at home in the delineation of the boldest passions of the human breast. In these, notwithstanding the fewness of his years, he literally "rides in the whirlwind and directs the storm."

It would be incorrect to construe the generality of this praise into the opinion that his performances are faultless: this is far from being the case. In easy declamation and light dialogue, he does not succeed so well. Owing to the weakness of a voice, not yet ma-

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acquired, nor do we bow with much deference before it.

It must, however, be conceded, that Master Payne is not always equally great, but it is because he is not always equally attentive. He selects with unerring judgment, what are called the *good points* in his character, and gives them with so much force, with so much energy and beauty, that it is almost impossible that their excellencies should not be indelibly stamp'd upon the minds of his audience. He then appears to be satisfied until another great occasion calls forth a correspondent exertion. This trait in the performance of Master Payne, was particularly discernible in his representation of Young Norval, in which character he made his *debut*, when so much apathy was discovered on his first appearance, that we began to fear " 'twas youth had given him a name"—a few scenes, however, introduced us to his store of excellence, from which we have derived indescribable pleasure, and look to it as a rich source of future gratification. His Selim, in *Barbarossa*, last evening, did ample justice to our expectations, and we fancy the most fastidious were ardent to crown him with the wreath of praise.

We have to apologize to his brother performers, when we confess that our attentions were so exclusively bestowed upon the young candidate for fame, that we could not witness, and of course cannot reward their different merits—We could not, however, but be attracted "ever and anon," by vivid flashings from another quarter, which, if reserved for hours of more obscurity, would have completely illumined the surrounding scene. But for the circumstance we have mentioned, Mr. Young's *Glenalvon* must have called

a young gentleman in the character of *Norval*, for the first time on the London boards. His reception was eminently flattering, and his performance, which was crowned throughout with unmixed and unbounded applause, fully justified the fond anticipations of his friends, and the sanguine hopes of the few who were apprised of his *debut*. An untoward accident prevents us this day from entering into a detailed review of the merits of his performance. This defect we shall supply in our next, as it would be equally unjust to our own feelings, and negligent of our readers' gratification, not to prepare them for what they have to expect in the future and (making allowance for a first appearance) still more effective exhibitions of his powers. Miss Smith was prevented from taking the part of Lady Randolph by the illness of her mother. Mrs. Powell, by permission of the Covent Garden Managers, took Miss Smith's place, and played the character admirably. Mr. Raymond sustained the part of Glenalvon respectably, and Anna and Lord Randolph had adequate representatives in Miss Boyce and Mr. Holland.

London, June 5, 1813.



FROM THE DAY.

WITH sincere pleasure we redeem the pledge, which it was our duty to give the public on Saturday, of entering minutely and critically into Mr. Payne's recent and able representation of the interesting character of Douglas. Our expectations had attained considerable elevation, when it was anonymously an-

nounced that a young gentleman would appear, for the first time in London, as the heir of Douglas, on the 4th of June; for through an incidental channel we had learned some particulars of the previous progress and history of the debutant. We had reason to think, therefore, that the forthcoming Norval, was the identical youth who had acquired the title and distinction of the American Roscius, and who had for two or three years enjoyed this histrionic glory without rival or abatement, awarded to him by the spontaneous admiration and suffrage of the whole United States. We turned to our files of Philadelphia, New York, Boston, Baltimore, Charleston, and other republican papers of the years 1809, 10, and 11, and there retraced the copious and convincing testimonials of his surprising genius and unexampled success. Expectation, therefore, prompted and invigorated by such excitements, took possession of our minds and feelings, and led us to look for, when we should witness the performance of this trans-Atlantic tragedian, unlimited gratification.

We hailed the occasion too, as one peculiarly gratifying to the British heart, and knowing from its genuine native goodness it would participate in our sensations and sentiments, we felt involuntarily predisposed to receive and admire—to felicitate and encourage—to applaud and animate the histrionic efforts of the adventurous youth, who, in the midst of an unhappy and vindictive war, had bade farewell to the friends of his bosom, and travelled across the ocean from the native scenes of his well-earned triumphs, in quest of British renown! Our hearts could not withhold the tribute of unaffected kindness to him whose

characteristic diffidence made him consider his fame incomplete, till it had won and received the sterling credential and seal of British approbation.

His feet had scarcely grown warm at his landing on the soil of our emporium for the reward of great abilities of every nation on the earth, when, with the impatience and alacrity inseparable from an insatiable love of honest fame, Mr. Payne formed an engagement (as we understand, for a few nights gratuitously) at Drury-lane Theatre, where we saw him on Friday night with very considerable satisfaction; gratified, indeed, we were; but our gratification, we will own, was not without qualification or limits. It is, however, in the power of Mr. Payne, if we may judge of his talents from the effect they produced, under all the disadvantages of a first appearance in a foreign land, to remove these limits the moment he becomes familiarized to a British stage, so as to feel that full confidence in himself which is indispensably necessary to the perfect developement of his powers.

Mr. Payne, in the course of his exhibition, rose gradually from respectable acting to striking personification, and ended in greatness. In the intermediate spaces, nevertheless, between that self-identification of passion, which precludes him from the possibility of bad acting (under whose influence sound judgment cannot err), and the minor excitations of human feeling, which alternate so frequently in the breast of the noble Douglas, he sometimes descended from the excellence which characterised every prominent passage throughout the whole of his performance.

But the sound law of legitimate criticism permits us to account for Mr. Payne's defects in the very principles themselves, which constitute the fabric of his

genius, a genius that has already exalted him high in fame, and that may yet, with due care and diligent cultivation, conduct him to a perpetual seat in the loftiest regions of her temple.

Though, upon the whole, the *debut* of Mr. Payne was as auspicious as that of any tragedian that we remember in this country ; still there were more adverse and disheartening circumstances, which account in a great measure for his not having shone in his original splendour. He had, as we understand, no regular rehearsal ; he did not know that Lady Randolph was to be performed by Mrs. Powell, till he heard the voice of that Lady a few moments previous to his coming for the *first* time (most critical moment!) into the presence of a British audience ; whose feeling, nevertheless, excited by his spirited acting, obliged them and us, we are glad to record, to cheer him with generous, animating, and unanimous applause. In addition to the depressing tendency of these untoward incidents, Mr. Payne acted evidently under the trepidation ever attached to a *first* appearance, and his attention must have been rendered less collected than it will be when he becomes accustomed to the critical gaze of an European audience. Yet he had the remarkable merit, a merit not always to be found in our best performers, that he never faltered once, and the text was delivered with the unvarying precision of *verbatim recitation*.

When we first beheld him at his entrance (a moment on which the celebrated Lord Chesterfield lays so much stress), we were forcibly impressed in his favour by the comeliness of his countenance, the expression of his features, the dignity of his manner, the harmony of his voice, and, what is equally fascinating, the conscious modesty of his approach and demeanour.

This modesty in him who has been long accustomed to the loftiest strains of praise and adulation, seemed plainly to be that inherent quality which is inseparable from the other ingredients which compose and constitute genius of the first order, and which may be termed the sister of worth and virtue. Indeed, the Western Roscius would have paid an ill compliment to a London audience, had he obtruded himself on them with the same irreverent self-possession, that would make no distinction in its address to a monarch or a domestic. The whole of the evening, it was manifest that Mr. Payne laboured under the embarrassment arising from a disciplined and modest humility as to his opinion of himself, for which we are confident every spectator admired him the more.

The applause he received at his first approach was ardent and universal; he acknowledged the auspicious kind greeting of the audience by several grateful obeisances. It was pleasing to observe the singular eagerness of the audience to hear the well-known speech in which Norval acquaints us with his name, and the events that first brought him into notice. This speech, from its length, is a laborious task to the reciter, let him be ever so well gifted for the task; it is too long, and is a very severe trial of chaste recitation to any performer. Mr. Payne's delivery and manner were more than merely good, though there was no opportunity for display.

His new readings were judicious and remarkable:

"My name is *Norval*," fell from him with original and attractive force. He made a pause between *my name is*, and *Norval*, i. e. *my name is—Norval*. The rest of this part was delivered (though with diffidence), in clear, distinct, generally harmonious enun-

ciation, correct emphasis, and happy effect, as the applause testified, and gave an earnest of that which he would obtain in the course of his representation.

In the quarrel scene, "Sir, I have been accustomed "all my days," was finely given in a cool, and at the same time, forceful and dignified manner.

In the last scene, the passage—

"The villain came behind me—BUT I SLEW HIM!"

received three distinct rounds of applause, called forth by the well-chosen pause, and admirable change of manner and tone.

With regard to Mr. Payne's dress, nothing could have been more classically elegant and appropriate, (if we except the sandals). Great taste was shown in the display of the ornaments, and the graceful adaptation of the dress to his person and figure. It was perfectly characteristic—and what we particularly remarked, as a novelty of much importance, the dress was not changed, as has been customary. The history of this dramatic action, does not certainly justify the change made by any of Mr. Payne's predecessors, nor could it be, in reality, at all probable that at such a time, place, and occasion, *Norval* should have put off his first suit. The time of the action, is less than one day. The modern military bonnet, not worn in *Norval's* time, was most judiciously thrown aside, and an ancient Scotch bonnet, with the eagle plume, used in its place.

The ancient and characteristic Scotch dagger, with a knife and fork attached, was also fastened in Mr. Payne's belt, and produced a novel effect. We must defer to another criticism, our remarks on Mr. Payne's new readings, and proceed now to an observation,

which we should be unjust to withhold. Though our duty to the Public, and our reverence for science, will oblige us from time to time, to take the liberty of admonishing Mr. Payne, and of offering him suggestions for his improvement, truth will bear us out, in declaring our opinion, that Mr. Payne possesses all the intrinsic requisites of a great actor, and that many of those requisites were exhibited at his *debut*, though they were not developed in their full extent.

London, June 8, 1813.



FROM THE BRITISH PRESS.

THE Tragedy of *Douglas* was last night represented at Drury-lane, and introduced to the notice of a London audience, as the hero of the piece, a young gentleman, of very considerable dramatic powers.—In the representative of the brave, ingenuous *Douglas*, “*the young eaglet of a valiant nest*,” we expect to see elegance of form, and intelligence of feature—The *Douglas* of last night, as far as a theatrical spectator has an opportunity of judging, possesses both. His person is slender, but well proportioned; his countenance animated and expressive. In the formation of his exterior, nature has been very bountiful—but her gifts have not ended there:—through the whole of his performance, traits of a mind, ingenious and discriminating, were very frequently observable. Indeed, from the variety of novelties which the *debutant* introduced in the course of the evening, it is most evident, that, far from considering himself bound to imitate, either the style of acting known to us traditionally, of those who originally filled the cha-

racter, or yet the course pursued by his cotemporaries, he has studied for himself. His delivery of the text abounded in new readings; and though we cannot, in all instances, congratulate him on his success, yet we gladly acknowledge, that, in many passages, the alterations which he introduced, sometimes of *emphasis*, and sometimes of *punctuation*, were judicious. But even where, in our opinion, he erred, his very error, evidently the offspring of an active and inquisitive mind, which, in the ardency of youth, does not always lead to just conclusions, filled us with a much stronger presentiment of his ultimate excellence, than if he had appeared before us,

“ Coldly correct, and classically dull.”

Such a performance, where, on the one hand, there is nothing to praise, and on the other, there is nothing to censure—such a performance, neither soaring into masculine strength, nor softening into feminine beauty, can only excite one feeling (if that can be so termed, which exists only when all other feeling is nearly extinct), that of *oscitancy*. Far different was last night's representation of *Douglas*. It is true, it did not exhibit one continued blaze of excellence; but the coruscations of genius, the flashes of a mind extremely sensitive, replete with the finest feeling, might be traced in every scene. With the opening speech of *Douglas*, we confess we were not pleased. The frequent transition of voice, which had rather an unpleasant effect, is entirely unnecessary. The performer was desirous of appearing with all the simplicity of an uncultured youth. But in the pursuit of that simplicity, he occasionally lost sight of nature. Labouring to appear

artless, his art became apparent. His reply to *Lord Randolph*, which almost immediately follows—

“ I know not how to thank you. Rude I am
In speech and manners; never till this hour
Stood I in such a presence,” &c.

was delivered with an energetic modesty, a chastened feeling, indicating at once the pleasure he experienced, and the sense of humility which prevented him from giving full scope to his feelings, finely descriptive of the character. In that interview with *Lady Randolph*, where the secret of his birth is revealed to him, we were delighted with several bursts of passion. That passage, in which he imagines the distresses of his mother—

—————“ It is, it must be so—
Your countenance confesses that she's wretched.
O! tell me her condition! Can the sword—
Who shall resist me in a parent's cause?”

was given with all the anxiety which the desire to learn the fate of a parent, and to avenge her wrongs, may be supposed to excite. In the quarrel with *Glenalvon*, if we except the speech, beginning,

“ Sir, I have been accustomed all my days
To hear and speak the plain and simple truth;”

(throughout the whole of which, the conflict between the pride which conscious rectitude imparts—a pride, which, in *Douglas*, is sublimated by the knowledge of his noble birth, and that prudence which counsels him to conceal the secret which trembles on his tongue, were accurately expressed), with the exception of that passage, he was too boisterous. His dying scene was excellent. *Douglas* only laments his fate, because he

is cut off from the career of glory. To exhibit, throughout his last moments, the tremulous voice, the cheerless countenance, the nerveless limbs, of an ordinary being, would be to forget the *hero* in the *man*. The new performer evinced much discrimination here, and, when he repeated the lines—

“ O! had I fall'n as my brave fathers fell,
Turning, with fatal arm, the tide of battle,
Like them I should have smil'd and welcom'd death!”

his voice, momentarily, assumed more strength, “ the hectic of a moment passed across his face,” his limbs, for an instant, appeared re-invigorated.

On the whole, we were much pleased with the performance; the more particularly so, as, we understand, the *debutant* had not a regular rehearsal in the character. The errors which we observed, were evidently the offspring of inexperience, errors which require very little effort to eradicate. His voice, which is sweet and powerful, was sometimes over-strained; and his action, though he was not very profuse of it, was sometimes violent, and, consequently, ungraceful. Defects like these, where the physical and mental powers exist, are soon corrected.

Mrs. Powell, of Covent-garden Theatre, sustained the character of *Lady Randolph*, in consequence of the absence of Miss Smith, whose attendance was precluded by the sudden and dangerous indisposition of her mother. Mrs. Powell performed with all her characteristic excellence.

London, June 5, 1813.

FROM THE SUN.

LAST night a performer, whose name is PAYNE, a native of America, and who, it is said, has acquired a considerable share of theatrical fame in that country, appeared for the first time on the British stage at Drury-lane Theatre, in the character of Young Norval. The part is very interesting in itself; and was rendered more so by the person and manner of the new candidate. Mr. PAYNE appears to be very young, and his deportment seemed to be the effect of feeling rather than of study. Hence, although it was, in general, rather prepossessing from its simplicity, it was sometimes ungraceful, and almost awkward. He had evidently considered the text of the character with great minuteness, and gave some passages with more of precision than has marked the usual delivery of them. Occasionally, however, there seemed too affected an accuracy. His pronunciation, particularly in words containing the vowel *a*, appeared to be provincial, but most probably was precisely American. His figure and countenance altogether suggested the idea of a young woman in masculine attire, but his voice, though youthful, was manly and firm. His acting was evidently marked by feeling and good sense, and had an original cast, except that at times there seemed to be a kind of familiarity in his utterance, which he might be conceived to have adopted from the manner of the late Mr. Cooke, of whom, we understand, he is an avowed admirer. He was very much applauded throughout, particularly for his manner of dying, which was peculiarly simple and affecting.

London, June 5, 1813.

FROM THE STATESMAN.

LAST night the Theatre-Royal, Drury-lane, produced a novelty in the person of a young American candidate for British theatrical applause, in the character of Norval, in the excellent play of Douglas. It would not be doing justice to this aspirant after histrionic renown, if we omitted to say, that he acquitted himself with *éclat*, and afforded the audience (particularly attentive to this *debut* in another juvenile *Roscious*) considerable reflection and satisfaction by his new, and, in many instances, improved emphasis.

London, June 5, 1813.



FROM THE GLOBE.

THE interesting stranger, who displayed so much talent at Drury-lane on Friday night, we learn is Mr. JOHN HOWARD PAYNE, a native of the United States in North America, and designated the *Roscious* of the New World. The reason that his name has not been heretofore announced to the public, arose altogether from his own modest solicitation to have it studiously concealed; as he was ardently desirous to stand or fall in the estimation of a British public, by the force and bearing of his professional talents, wholly unaided by any adventitious support. The dress worn by Mr. PAYNE, in Norval, has been highly commended, for its classical correctness and picturesque grandeur: every article of the ancient Highland costume, was preserved, even to the dirk, and knife and fork: this is evidence of a fine taste. It is rather remarkable, that the genuine Highland bonnet, which is exceedingly graceful, was introduced to our stage

for the first time by an American: its beauty was increased by the decorations, consisting of Scotch pine and eagle feathers.

London, June 7, 1813.



FROM THE PILOT.

A VERY young gentleman, apparently not above the age of eighteen, of the name of Payne, an American by birth, and of considerable celebrity on the Trans-Atlantic stage, made his first appearance before a London audience, at Drury-lane Theatre, last night, in the part of Norval, in the tragedy of Douglas. This young gentleman, it is said, was induced to present himself in this country by the recommendation of that admirable actor Cooke, who discerned and cherished his early talents: he evinced in many passages powers that bore testimony to the justice and penetration of that distinguished judge of scenic merit. The young candidate was honoured with the most encouraging marks of public approbation. He has the leading materials for becoming an eminent actor—a good voice—judicious and powerful declamation—good face, countenance, and figure—though all wanting further development from time.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PILOT.

SIR—The liberal reception of Mr. Payne at the Drury-lane Theatre last evening, so honourable to the British character, cannot but excite in the mind of every honest American sensibilities of the highest order—such as, I am persuaded, will ever be *peculiarly* appreciated, as well by Mr. Payne and his particular friends, as by those of both countries, who sympa-

thize in their present political misfortunes. And whilst, on the one hand, the writer of this article is animated with the purest sense of gratitude for that generous protection which this government extends to every individual of the United States now sojourning here, there remains a duty for me to ask the performance of at your hands, which can only be justified by a direct appeal to your own heart. A voice was heard by a casual friend, uttered with apparent confidence, announcing Mr. Payne the illegitimate son of the infamous Mr. Thomas Paine! renowned surely for sturdy talents, but for evermore to be remembered as a curse to mankind. If expressions thus indignant shall sound too harsh for some ears to relish, I lay myself at the feet of virtue and irresistible *truth*, firmly protesting against the *fact*, and any, the most remote relationship. The biography of our present Norval may, perhaps, be necessarily demanded from a more competent hand; and yet none more respectful towards British readers, through the medium of your press, than him who owes your paper many valued obligations.

D. M. R.

June 5, 1813.



FROM THE MORNING HERALD.

AN event, somewhat memorable, occurred at Drury-lane Theatre last night. Mr. John Howard Payne, a native of the United States, in North America, and designated as the *Roscius* of the New World, made his dramatic *debut*, in the character of *Douglas*, and the reason that his name has not been heretofore announced to the public, arose, altogether, from his own modest solicitation to have it studiously concealed; as he was

ardently desirous to stand or fall, in the estimation of a British Public, by the force and bearing of his professional talents, wholly unaided by any species of *puffing* whatever. Nor was it even known, in the auditory, that this ingenious young gentleman was a foreign stranger, though the effect of such knowledge would have operated in the generous bosom of *John Bull*, to have made him trebly tender to the meritorious objects of presentation.

When he came, for the first time, upon the stage, at the commencement of the second act, he was loudly and generously greeted by the audience, and it was evident, from his tone and mien, that he was labouring under those impressions of apprehension, which are ever the concomitants of genuine worth, in a claimant upon renown, so young as he is.

Previous to the performance of the Tragedy, an apology was made by Mr. Raymond for Miss Smith, who, we were sorry to hear, is much indisposed: and Mrs. Powell, of Covent-garden Theatre, filled the character in her stead. This event wore rather an inauspicious feature for Mr. Payne, upon his primary effort before a London audience: yet we do not believe that it is in the disposition of any of the governors of this establishment, to send so unassuming a candidate before the Public, with a bow-string round his neck.

Mr. Payne appears to be under twenty years of age; his person is small, yet it is graceful; and he has a marking black eye, that is duly obedient in the illustration of his feeling. His voice is clear, and capable of much modulation, though he seems to act more directly from the warm impulses of *Nature*, than the iron institutes of the Critic. Certain it is, that his

celebrity in America was such, that he was publicly hailed with pride, by the sons and daughters of Wit and Beauty, as the first and greatest instance of scenic perfection, that was ever born and bred among them ; and they gladly remunerated his exertions, with more liberality than was ever bestowed upon any other histrionic professor, with the exception of the lamented Mr. George Cooke, with whom Mr. Payne was a great favourite, and from whom he received many polite, and corrective, marks of attention !

He was thus characterised by a Bard of Massachusetts :—

“ In all the Drama's technic lore untaught,
He reads, by sentiment, and moves, by thought.
The tragic code of artificial speech,
Taste may reject, or Discipline may teach.
His caves of voice no measur'd thunders roll,
He speaks, from nature, and he looks, from soul !”

There is a little nonsense, and some inflation, in this encomium, yet it has some points that are justly descriptive of this young gentleman.

London, June 5, 1813.



FROM THE GLOBE.

A REPORT has found its way into the newspapers, that Mr. PAYNE, whose representation of Douglas, at Drury-lane Theatre, has excited so much interest, is the illegitimate son of TOM PAINE. It is totally destitute of foundation. Many most respectable American Gentlemen in London can testify, that the slightest connexion in family or friendship, never existed between them. The report probably originated in the name,

but even that corresponds only in sound. Had it been said that Mr. PAYNE was the son of Mrs. POWELL, it might have some appearance of truth, for she played *Lady Randolph*, as if she were his real mother.

London, June 9, 1813.



FROM THE PILOT.

SEVERAL friends of Mr. PAYNE, having noticed in the Pilot of Saturday evening, a paragraph contradicting a statement, said to have been made in the Theatre on the 4th of June, during Mr. PAYNE's personification of *Norval*, that this young gentleman is "*the illegitimate son of the infamous Mr. THOMAS PAINE,*" have called upon us, authorising a more explicit disavowal of this ridiculous calumny. We hope this gentleman's friends are perfectly satisfied, that the British public have too much generosity to allow, even for a moment, that an assertion, of which there can be given by the first characters in this country such abundant evidence to the contrary, should prejudice the interests of the young stranger. We are perfectly willing, however, to repel the falsehood in the most unequivocal manner; and to declare, although we trust there is no necessity for it, that the two persons are of families utterly distinct, and that the names are altogether different, the one being spelt with *i*, and the other with *y*. We take this opportunity to express our regret, that any person could have been found in a British audience, so far forgetting the hospitality due to a foreign stranger, as to endeavour to blast his early efforts by such gross and contemptible malice.

London, June 8, 1813.

FROM THE MORNING HERALD.

THIS evening's Oratorio was interspersed with readings by Miss SMITH, in which she displayed an accurate knowledge of her author, and delivered herself with just emphasis and sound discretion. On her *entrée* she met with some symptoms of popular disapproval, which grieved us when we heard them, as we believe her private worth runs parallel with her public talents. We think we can guess at the cause of this repelling conduct in the audience, which we believe some of them to have misunderstood; as it was not Miss SMITH, but her mother, who was taken suddenly ill on the night of Mr. Payne's first theatrical essay in London; but as the young gentleman is announced for another representation in Douglas, we trust that all parties will be eventually satisfied, and that this aspiring, yet modest youth, will not be compelled to re-cross the Atlantic, fraught with an idea that he was used unkindly upon British ground.

London, June 7, 1813.

FROM THE BRITISH PRESS.

LAST night the tragedy of Douglas was presented at this house, and the part of Norval was performed, for the second time, by Mr. Payne. Much as we were pleased with his first appearance, his repetition was calculated to increase our delight; he appeared to be mellowed in the part; he was perfected and confirmed in many beauties, and he has divested himself of many faults. The improvement he has made in so short a period, augurs most happily of his future excellence.

He is still, however, deficient in elevation; he is, as it were, too natural; a nearer acquaintance with the English stage will cure him of this error. Many of his new readings were most judicious, and were productive of the most lively sensations. In conception, indeed, he is never deficient or erroneous. His whole performance was received with signal applause.

London, June 15, 1813.



FROM THE GLOBE.

MR. WEST, President of the Royal Academy, honoured Mr. Payne's second performance of *Douglas*, on Monday evening, with his attendance. This is said to be the first time the venerable Artist has been to the Theatre since the days of his old and intimate friend Garrick. He expressed himself in the warmest terms of admiration, and remarked to a person by his side, "This young man has nothing to fear, and but little to learn." The approbation of such a person as Mr. West, must be more than gratifying to the subject of it.

London, June 18, 1813.



FROM THE MORNING HERALD.

LAST night there was another representation of the Tragedy of *Douglas*, in which Mr. Payne (the nationally-elected Roscius of the Trans-Atlantic world) made a second public bow before a London audience, with increased energy and increased effect. In the angry scene with Glenalvon, he maintained the meaning of his author with spirit, particularly when he ex-

claimed, "Hast thou no fears for thy presumptuous self?" Upon reconsidering the whole of this performance, we think that there have been but few representations of a tragedy this season, which were more generally satisfactory than this. Mr. Payne has ascended one step higher than heretofore on the ladder of renown.

London, June 15, 1813.



FROM THE WEEKLY DISPATCH.

THE AMERICAN ROSCIUS.

SUCH was the name given in his own country, to the young gentleman who has already appeared twice in the character of *Norval*, at Drury-lane Theatre; and who, although he came forward under all the circumstances of modest concealment which the situation he stood in would admit of, has already given a fair promise of rivalling some of our first performers. A youth from a remote country—a country nearly two centuries behind us in the improvement of every art, must come before a London audience under every possible disadvantage. There must necessarily be a difference of manner, of deportment, of enunciation, and even of accent—all tending to make rather an unfavourable impression. We may form some idea of the impression an actor from Ephesus would have made two thousand years ago on one of the theatres of Athens, where the Greek language had arrived at such a degree of polish, that the common fruit-women could criticise all the niceties of its pronunciation. Great, however, as is the distance of America from England, there is no greater difference of accent between the inhabitants of London and New-York, than between those

of London and Norwich. With respect to Mr. Payne, the young performer we are speaking of, a little study under a judicious instructor, will soon correct the trifling deficiencies which are discoverable in his enunciation: while, by the aid of a fencing and dancing-master, he may acquire more graceful attitudes than he now exhibits. In all other respects Nature has endowed him with every quality for a great actor. He possesses all the simplicity which is the result of a fine taste; and he appears to have a chasteness of feeling, and a judiciousness of conception, which never suffers him to run into those vicious extravagancies so common in blustering, half-formed actors. He speaks at once to the sober senses, to the feelings, and to the heart. In passages where no vehemence of passion is required, he is calm, temperate, and interesting. He never rants unnecessarily. His "own discretion is his tutor." But when he came to contend with Glenalvon, he burst forth with all the fire of indignation and anger, arising from wounded pride. And when he found he was to "perish by a villain's hand," his remark, that "he had slain him," was not delivered in a loud boasting tone, but in the mild accents of a dying hero, modestly conscious of his courage. Such is the character of this young gentleman, who makes a fairer promise than any juvenile adventurer we have ever seen; and who, like some valuable raw material brought from a distant country, only wants a little of that fine polishing which English artists can give, in order to make him perfect.

London, June 28, 1813.

FROM THE GLOBE.

SHAKESPEARE'S Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet, was presented on Saturday evening, the part of *Romeo* by Mr. Payne, whose performance of *Douglas* we noticed, as indicative of powers, which required only study and attention, to call them into full action, and place them in a very prominent situation on the British stage. The same general observations which we made on that representation, are equally applicable to the present occasion. The delicacy of Mr. Payne's features, and the graceful slenderness of his figure, qualifications which might operate against his towering as the hero, are perfectly suited to the representative of the lover. In the course of Mr. Payne's performance, we were frequently surprised and delighted by those sudden and unpremeditated flights and bursts of genius, which, as they are a proof of great mental stamina, we consider as atoning for those errors which were occasionally observable.

"Puraque divinæ semina mentis habet."

His garden scene, the rencontre with Tybalt, and the dying scene, were remarkable for that which can alone render a performance effective; a strict adherence to the feelings of nature. His action, of which (contrary to what we have observed in most young actors) he is by no means profuse, is generally violent, and, consequently unpleasing. In the management of his voice, he is deficient. The organ itself is good, but he does not modulate it skilfully. By overstraining, it at times assumes a harshness, which, naturally, we think does not belong to it.

London, June 21, 1818.

FROM THE SUNDAY REVIEW.

MR. PAYNE made his third appearance last night at Drury-lane Theatre, in the character of Romeo, and was well received throughout.

London, June 20, 1813.



FROM THE MORNING ADVERTISER.

SATURDAY night the tragedy of *Romeo and Juliet* was performed, in which Mr. PAYNE, the youthful actor from America, made his appearance in *Romeo*. He had an admirable conception of his author, gave additional proofs of his capability as an actor, and much promise of becoming a distinguished ornament of the histrionic art. In the tender parts of the character, he was unequal to those passages where his fire and energy are called into action, rather than his pathos or delineation of love. His action is easy and graceful, but at times too redundant, and in many instances he reminded us of the manner of the late Mr. Cooke, of whom he evidently appears to have been an ardent admirer. He was much applauded.

London, June 21, 1813.



FROM THE MORNING HERALD.

ON Saturday that theatrical and interesting young stranger, Mr. PAYNE, made another attempt to establish himself as a tragedian among us, in the ardent yet tender character of *Romeo*. There were many portions of the part in which he certainly elicited much fire, and proved that he possessed a proper knowledge of his author. In the whole of the garden

scene, Mr. PAYNE delivered himself in a manner so just, as drew forth many enthusiastic bursts of applause; but in the louder tones of violence he was not so felicitous.

During the actual performance of this Tragedy, we were much disgusted with the ill-timed exclamations of some persons in the upper tier of boxes, who seemed to labour to disconcert this modest stranger, with such language as did not dishonour him to whom it was addressed, but those who gave it utterance. It is not because we are in a state of warfare with America, that an unoffending citizen of the New World is to be treated harshly among us, who has journeyed to our national threshold, and ingenuously asked permission to sojourn among us, in order to ameliorate the quality of an honest ambition, by the superior lustre of British example. If the impulses of shame are not extinguished in the bosoms of those who designated Mr. PAYNE as "A DAMN'D YANKEE," in the hearing of Mr. W—D, let them blush and be repentant, when they may peruse this register of their malice and their folly—let them know that their countrymen are received and liberally entertained on Trans-Atlantic ground, without any savage reference to the land which gave them birth and being. The charm of politeness, like the exercise of mercy,

" is twice blest;
" It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:"

And he who denies its administration, is a greater enemy to himself than to others. But lest our imperfect language should fall short of the required definition, we will present the governing sentiments of the Abbé Bellegarde; who was the very mirror of elegance, as well as morals, in the Court of Louis the Fourteenth:—

“ La politesse est un précis de toutes les vertus morales : c'est un assemblage de discrétion, de civilité, de circonspection, pour rendre à chacun les *devoirs* qu'il a droit d'exiger;”

And the power to be uncivil, is never exercised in a spirit of wantonness, by those who have a just sense of what is due to themselves.

It has a ludicrous effect to behold a vulgar object swell and swagger with an importance that is at odds with manners ; but it hath a sorrowful effect, to behold the same abasing grimaces in A MAN OF LOCAL DIGNITY, as every departure from the ordinances of reason, is, more or less, a symptom of dementation, and, as the love-lorn Rosalind says,

“ Deserves a dark room and clean straw,”

by way of purgation : but this is a strange, accommodating era, in which we breathe ; for madness is now assumed at the pleasure of the party, as a panoply for crime as well as *folly* ! That our modern bards (as the dull varlets presumptuously call themselves) may claim the benefits resulting from a statute of lunacy, none will, we trust, deny ; but as the same charitable advantages are not, as yet, extended to the spectators of the drama, we think that it would be discreet in them to withhold the exhibition of their weakness, until they have received a similar bill of indemnity from the commission of error, from a concurring world.

London, June 22, 1813.



FROM THE GLOBE.

WE understand that engagements for the country are flocking in upon Mr. PAYNE, and that he commences his career of acting in the provincial theatres

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in the course of next week at Liverpool. The Drury-lane season now draws near its conclusion, and the warm weather is extremely unpropitious to theatricals, or we presume [we should have been gratified with more of this young gentleman's performances; but, as we have no doubt of seeing him in the commencement of the next season, when the Theatre will be more a subject of attention, we trust we shall see him improved by study and practice, and confirmed in the great success with which the public have already honoured him.

London, June 24, 1813.

MR. PAYNE'S
PERFORMANCES IN LIVERPOOL.

FROM BILLINGE'S ADVERTISER.

MR. PAYNE made his *debut* on our stage last Friday evening, in the character of *Norval*, to the greatest house this season. He was received throughout with the most animating and enthusiastic applause, and is announced to perform again to-morrow evening, the part of *Achmet* in the tragedy of *Barbarossa*.

Liverpool, July 5, 1813.

FROM GORE'S GENERAL ADVERTISER.

MR. PAYNE has performed three times at our theatre, with the warmest and most unqualified applause. He made his *debut* in *Douglas* on Friday, and acted *Selim* in *Barbarossa* on Wednesday, and

Mr. Payne's Performances in Liverpool. 113

last evening appeared in the character of *Romeo*. The enthusiastic encouragement he receives, and the talent which he displays nightly with increased effect, promise to make the engagement lucrative and honourable to himself, and highly gratifying to the public.

Liverpool, July 8, 1813.



FROM THE LIVERPOOL MERCURY.

MR. PAYNE has been received in Liverpool with well-merited *éclat*. His performance of *Douglas*, *Achmet*, and *Romeo*, exhibits many marks of judgment, and we are happy to find that his continuance in our town is not to be so short as was at first apprehended. We have no doubt but that his powers will be more fully appreciated as they become more generally known.

Liverpool, July 15, 1813.



FROM GORE'S GENERAL ADVERTISER.

THE performance of *Hamlet* by Mr. Payne, on Tuesday evening, being his fourth appearance in Liverpool, was received with more enthusiasm than either of the plays which preceded it. It augurs well, when an actor nightly improves upon his audience. The management of the close of the play scene was hailed with loud cheering, and the curtain dropped to four rounds of applause.

Liverpool, July 15, 1813.



FROM THE LIVERPOOL MERCURY.

MR. PAYNE'S benefit on Friday evening, was attended by one of the most elegant audiences which have graced the Theatre this season. From the unpropitiousness of the times, we presume Mr. Payne, like all his predecessors, may have failed in deriving as much profit from his engagement, as we could have wished; but his attraction has not been exceeded by others, and he must feel highly gratified by the uniform and nightly increasing enthusiasm of his reception, and the rapturous applause which crowned his parting effort.

At the close of the interlude, Mr. Payne unexpectedly appeared in *propria persona* before the curtain, and made the following spontaneous address :

“ LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

“ I should think myself wanting in gratitude and candour, could I quit this place without emphatically acknowledging the warm welcome with which I have been honoured by the inhabitants of Liverpool, and those particularly concerned in the direction of the Theatre. (*Loud Applause*). It has been every thing which could be hoped from hospitality, and has forced me to forget that I was a stranger.—(*Loud Applause, and “ Bravo’ from every part of the House*). Under existing circumstances, Ladies and Gentlemen, I must feel, and feel sensibly, the magnanimity of that spirit, which disdaining national distinctions, can hail even the humblest member of the family of Literature and the Arts, in whatsoever clime accident may have thrown his birth-place, as a brother and a friend!”

The applause at the end of this address was pro-

tracted to five or six rounds, and the most rapturous we ever remember to have heard.

The morning subsequent to the benefit, Mr. Payne received the following letter from Mr. T. D. Lewis, one of the Managers of the Theatre, with a copy of which we have been favoured by one of his friends.

" Clayton-Square, Sept. 4, 1813.

" DEAR SIR,

" In the absence of Mr. Knight, I beg leave to offer you the thanks of the Managers, for the handsome manner in which you thought it proper to express yourself, respecting their conduct towards you, in your Address of last evening.

" I have to assure you, there was as much pleasure on the one part in conferring any little acts of justice, and kindness, as there has been gratitude on the other, in making a public acknowledgment of them.

" I take this opportunity of expressing a sincere obligation, for the service your talents have rendered the Theatre.

" That every success may attend your theatric career, is the ardent hope of,

" Dear Sir,

" Your obedient humble servant, &c.

*" John Howard Payne, Esq.
Murray-street."*



MR. PAYNE'S
PERFORMANCES IN MANCHESTER.



FROM THE MANCHESTER HERALD.

MR. PAYNE, the American Roscius, has recently gratified the town by the performance of some conspicuous parts in tragedy. This gentleman has a figure, not imposing, but well-proportioned; a face almost too beautiful for a man; and a voice, the clearest and most bell-like we ever remember to have heard. His acting is quite equal, if not superior, to that of Mr. Betty at the time of public admiration and enthusiasm in his favour. In graceful attitudes, and the pantomime of the art, they are nearly equal; in expression of countenance and conception of character, Mr. Payne has by far the advantage, but in treading the stage, the palm must be given to Mr. Betty.

Manchester, March 15, 1814.

MR. PAYNE'S

PERFORMANCES IN DUBLIN.



FROM THE DUBLIN MONTHLY MUSEUM.

THEATRICAL REGISTER.

May 2nd, 1814, Pizarro—Quadrupeds.

This play introduced to our notice, in the character of *Rolla*, a performer, who forms a prominent figure

in the theatric picture for the month. He is a native American, who, from a wish to improve himself in his profession, has visited these islands, and has in both met with a reception highly creditable to himself and his new friends. As to him, he deserves much praise, for so well appreciating the national character, as to suppose that a state of national hostility would not influence the public opinion with respect to individual merit; and, as to ourselves, at least equal merit is due, in confirming by our conduct an opinion so honourable to the national character. We have heard but of one exception to this assertion, in the person of a tradesman in Dublin, who refused to go to Mr. Payne's benefit, because "he would not encourage the enemies of his country!"

Mr. Payne has evinced such proofs of real talent and judgment in most of the characters he appeared in, as to efface in a great measure some disadvantages under which he labours. He supplies the want of stature, which is below the middle size, by an air that seldom deserts him; and his voice, which, though clear and articulate, is not of great compass, is so well regulated, that he never pitches it in a key unsuitable to its powers. Miss Walstein played Cora, and Miss O'Neill Elvira; had the parts been exchanged, we know of no theatre which could have produced two actresses better qualified to support them. Elvira was incorrect, as well as impolite, in walking off the stage while Rolla was addressing her in an animated speech.

Both Mr. Payne's performances of Rolla, which he acted twice within the week, were received with great applause.

May 4th, Lovers' Vows—Is He a Prince?

MR. PAYNE in *Frederick*, looked and acted the part; the scene in which he discovers himself to his guilty parent, deserved all the applause it gained.

May 9th, Hamlet—Raising the Wind.

HAMLET is one of the most hazardous parts for a young actor. The difficulties he has to encounter, in order to give full effect to a character so delicately touched, and of such variety, are heightened by the interest which the public takes in its representation. No character in the drama is so well known to the audience. Every spectator deems himself qualified to decide on the actor's merits in this part. Mr. Payne displayed an intimate acquaintance with the author. In his scene with the players he was excellent, and threw new light on several passages. Miss Walstein's Ophelia was delicately finished.

May 11th, Barbarossa—Lock and Key.

IN this play Mr. Payne had to experience some of the effects of the mismanagement, which it is our wish to aid in correcting. In one scene he had to introduce a speech extempore, to conceal from the audience the awkwardness he could not but feel, when left alone in a situation where one of the actors, we forget which, should have rushed forward instantly to his relief.

May 14th, Tancred and Sigismunda—Ways and Means.

IN this play Mr. Payne had again to undergo the penance of a long pause; the audience, however, did him

the justice to express, by their reception of the performer who was in fault, their opinion of the treatment to which he was exposed.

May 19th, Hamlet—Fortune's Frolics.

MR. PAYNE this night surpassed his former acting in the same part. He either met with no checks from mismanagement behind the scenes, or was prepared for them. His style was just and impressive, and produced its full effect upon the audience.

May 21st, Jane Shore—Tekeli.

THIS play was very respectably got up. In MR. PAYNE we particularly admired the manly spirit which burst forth in his delivery of the following passage in Lord Hastings:

" I own the glorious subject fires my breast,
" And my soul's darling passion stands confest—
" Beyond or love's, or friendship's sacred band,
" Beyond myself, I PRIZE MY NATIVE LAND!"

In his situation it had peculiar effect, and was hailed with reiterated applause.

May 23rd, Alexander the Great—Devil to Pay.

MR. PAYNE closed his twelve nights by taking a benefit on this evening. He made some happy points in Alexander, particularly in his quarrel with Clytus, and the dying scene. Fullam was very good in the cynical Clytus, and Miss O'Neill looked and acted Statira. But with the exception of Alexander himself, not one of the characters were dressed in Grecian costume. The females were particularly defective. Statira appeared in white satin, made up according to

the last number of Ackerman; Roxana, in coloured spangled muslin; and Sysigambis in a suit of black velvet and crape.



FROM THE HIBERNIAN JOURNAL.

THE departure of Mr. Payne from our boards, was marked by an incident of deep interest; which rivetted his claims upon the best feelings our countrymen. His extemporaneous parting Address on that occasion, was one of the best conceived efforts of the kind we ever remember to have heard, and certainly nothing was ever received with greater fervour and delight. The impression created by this gentleman's performances, especially his Hamlet, has been of such a nature as to excite the warmest wishes in every quarter for his speedy return, which will be hailed whenever it may happen, with all the warmth which Irish liberality never fails to exercise towards public talent and private worth. The following is, we believe, a faithful report of the Address to which we allude:

“ LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

“ The unusual circumstances under which I have
 “ appeared before you, will, I trust, explain and justify
 “ this unusual mode of acknowledging the politeness
 “ with which my theatrical efforts have been received
 “ in Dublin. (*Loud Applause*).—It is not my object
 “ to thank you for having buried national hostilities
 “ in your generosity to an individual. (*Loud and
 “ prolonged Applause*).—The want of a disposition
 “ to do this is illiberal, but there is no liberality in
 “ possessing it. I have too much respect for those

“ whom I have the honour to address, to incur the
“ risk of offending them by offering thanks for so ne-
“ gative a kindness. But permit the Wanderer, who
“ has been warmed by the sunshine of the Emerald
“ Isle, (*Shouts of bravo!—and reiterated Applause*)
“ —in the plain sincerity of gratitude to declare, that
“ in whatever clime or circumstances accident may
“ place him, it will ever be his glory to hail the Irish-
“ man as a brother, (*Bravo!—loud Applause*), and to
“ proclaim to his own country and the world, that the
“ stranger may make friends in other lands, but in
“ Erin he shall find a HOME!”

It is unnecessary to add, that this Address was fol-
lowed by reiterated rounds of violent applause.

Dublin, May 26, 1814.



FROM THE HIBERNIAN JOURNAL

AN incident somewhat extraordinary occurred at the theatre in Waterford, on the 15th of July last. Mr. Payne sustained the character of *Hamlet* with very great applause, and after the play, a comic song was, in a manner, sung by a member of the company. After the song finished, the people in the gallery, with one accord spontaneously cried out, “Home! Home! Home!” The hint was taken by the rest of the house, who joined in the cry, expecting, of course, nothing which would be worth listening to after the *Hamlet* of the evening had retired. Some persons then called out, “A clap for Mr. Payne!” and a general peal of prolonged applause succeeded, after which the audience moved in a body from the house, and when the curtain drew up for the afterpiece, the asto-

nished performers came forward, and found not that a soul remained to listen to their efforts!

Dublin, July 30, 1814.

MR. PAYNE'S

PERFORMANCES IN CORK.



FROM THE BRITISH PRESS.

DUBLIN THEATRICAL RIOTS.

A CORRESPONDENT in yesterday's *Morning Chronicle*, defends the Dublin audience from the charge of wishing "to hoot an individual out of his property, and expatriating him and his family for manliness of mind, in refusing to submit to self-degradation;" and alleges, that the ostensible "cause of dissatisfaction, the disappointment of the dog, was but a pretext with a malignant few, to cover a long-hatched and organised spirit of mischief."—That strong feelings against the management had existed for a long time, not only in the metropolis, but wherever the company went, is amply proven by the following extract from a respectable Dublin Magazine, of October last:—"The closing of the Dublin Theatre led us to expect a respite to ourselves from the painful task of censorial inquisition. The letter we proceed to lay before the public, proves the correctness of our late judgments on the managerial conduct of the Theatre, by shewing that the sentiments of the people of Cork, as to the demicompany detached from Dublin, to carry on the summer campaign in that city, exactly corresponds with what we have undeviatingly adhered to here.

Mr. Boyle, Editor of the *Cork Freeholder*, attempted to address the audience of the theatre, in that city, on the first night it opened (August 20, 1814), and call the Managers to account, for exhibiting so worthless a company, and so uncomfortable a house. The circumstance which particularly drew him out, was the impropriety of permitting the scene between *Osrick* and *Hamlet* (the last scene but one of the play) to be acted before the green curtain. The acting manager, Mr. Williams, and Mr. Payne, who performed *Hamlet*, were then on the stage. Mr. Boyle, however, was immediately hustled :—the Sheriff came forward to command order. Mr. Boyle, in the scuffle, struck the Sheriff—and for that offence was sentenced to a fine of fifty pounds, and six months' imprisonment. The trial excited great interest, and the Court was crowded to excess. Counsellor O'Connell defended Mr. Boyle, and in a report of his speech, we find the following passages :—

“ My Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury—It has has been clearly proved and admitted, on both sides, that the house, scenery, and performers, with one or two exceptions, were wretched beyond all endurance, and every way inadequate to the rational entertainment or accommodation of the refined and critical audience of Cork. The house was scandalously filthy in its interior, and in its architecture so very insecure, that it was found necessary to vanquish the terrors of the public, by proclaiming the opinion of a celebrated architect in its favour, before the Managers durst venture to open it ! But architects, as well as doctors, sometimes disagree, and there are still many well-informed architects, who think the house in a most dangerous condition. But, when it did open, what mockery of de-

coration ! The scenery would appear as though it had been raked out of all the barns in the country, so monstrously disproportioned to the extent of the stage, and so unfitted for its uses ! In one situation, a thatched cabin represents a royal palace ; in another, a waterfall tumbles and foams in the street of a great city ; and a grove presents itself for a library, with abundance of unlettered leaves, but not one book in the collection ! The performers, with the exception of one or two leading characters, worse, if possible, than the scenery. One of these exceptions is a young lady, an Irish girl (Miss O'Neill, the *Ophelia* of that evening), whose talents are an ornament to her country, and whose virtues are an honour to her sex ; who, from the purest and highest motives which can ennoble human character, has sacrificed those delicacies which emanate from the current prejudice against the stage, and prompted to her efforts by the claims of filial and sisterly affection, makes us at once revere her principles, as much as we admire her powers. Such a girl, I must confess, bursting through the veil of obscurity with which chance and necessity had shrouded her, into the meridian blaze of public admiration, ought to hallow the disgusting temple in which her divinity is displayed.

“ My Lord, and Gentlemen of the Jury, I am particularly charged by my client to contradict a report which has gone abroad, that he went to the Theatre for the purpose of attacking Mr. Payne, on the ground of his being an American, and belonging to a nation with which we are unfortunately at war. Monstrous and unfounded charge ! Had this been the case, I would not have opened my lips in his defence. Mr. Boyle has too expanded a mind, too generous a heart,

too just a sense of the rites of hospitality; and Mr. Boyle knows and feels, that these countries have a natural and national motive of love and regard for a people sprung from our own stock, our descendants, and our brethren. On the subject of Mr. Payne's professional powers, it becomes me to be silent, and it becomes me for this reason:—to every other member of the establishment I am a stranger, and this gentleman is my FRIEND. Of those qualifications which are open to the public, let the public judge; but I cannot withhold from him that eulogium which his personal intimates are only competent to bestow; and I must be permitted to declare, that I never had the honour of conversing with a young gentleman of more liberal mind, more affable and interesting manners, or taste more cultivated, classical, and refined.”

London, Jan. 19, 1815.



FROM THE DUBLIN MONTHLY MUSEUM.

OCCASIONAL ADDRESS,

Written by Charles Phillips, Esq. and spoken by Mr. Payne, at his Benefit, in Cork, Aug. 29, 1814. The play was Douglas—Douglas, Mr. Payne; Lady Randolph, Miss O'Neill. The farce, Catherine and Petruchio—Catherine, Miss O'Neill; Petruchio, Mr. Payne. The house was crowded with a most fashionable and elegant audience.

Who has not felt—by fate impell'd to roam—
The holy spell that binds the heart to home?
Who, but at times has turn'd the tearful eye
To the dear, sainted spot of infancy,
Where Love, on Memory's lip, impress'd the kiss
Of all its innocence, and all its bliss;
And led by fancy thro' her fairy bowers,
Youth play'd in sun-beams, and repos'd on flowers!

Alas! the exil'd heart alone can tell
The ling'ring sorrows of that sad farewell,
When every trifle some attractions lend,
Claiming the tribute of an early friend ;
And all he lov'd, collected on the shore,
Reminds the pilgrim, they may meet no more !

Yet there are charms a solace to impart,
Charms e'en to heal the exile's wounded heart—
Charms to repress the sigh, and prism the tear,
Make sorrow smile, and render absence dear!
Oh, I can say it—I HAVE FOUND THEM HERE!

Yet little known to fortune or to fame,
Not quite a stranger to thy shores I came—
For far beyond the waste of waters wild,
Oft have I mus'd when Erin's absent child,
Taught the rude echoes of my native scene
The varied wonders of his Isle of Green!
HIS ANGEL ISLE! where sorrow never came
To mourn in silence a neglected claim!
Where, though but scant the peasant's humble fare,
The way-worn pilgrim ever found a share ;
And the poor host one only wish express'd—
He could make better what his welcome bless'd.

NATURE'S OWN CHILDREN! who that e'er has seen
The Sabbath wonders of thy rustic green,
Where innocence arrayed her village court,
And sires and matrons mingled in the sport—
Who that has seen thee in the battle day,
When War's hoarse clarion rous'd his red array,
Pouring thy mountain torrent swift and strong,
Where Death career'd, and ruin roll'd along—
Who that has heard the music of thy brakes,
Or seen, like little inland seas, thy lakes,
Where countless diamond islets sweetly shine,
Set in the amber wave by hands divine,

But fondly wish'd thy MISERIES should cease,
And thy SWEET PLAINS FOR EVER SMILE IN PEACE!

Accept, dear Land! all feeling can impart,
The pure and priceless homage of the heart!
Oh! soon may Freedom wave her hallow'd wings
Around the home of heroes and of kings,
And Peace adorn thee with her angel smile,
GEM OF THE OCEAN—LOVELY EMERALD ISLE!



FROM THE DUBLIN EVENING POST.

At a dinner given on one of the islands in the Lake of Killarney, at which Mr. Phillips, and Mr. Payne the American Tragedian, were present, a toast was given, in combined reference to the two strangers, and the countries to which they belonged. Mr. Phillips, after the toast was drank, replied to the company in the following manner:—

“ It is not with the vain hope of returning by words the kindnesses which have been literally showered upon me during the short period of our acquaintance, that I now interrupt for a moment, the flow of your festivity; indeed it is not necessary—an Irishman needs no requital for his hospitality; its generous impulse is the instinct of his nature, and the very consciousness of the act carries its recompense along with it. But, Sir, there are sensations excited by an allusion in your toast, under the influence of which silence would be impossible. To be associated with Mr. Payne, must be, to any one who regards private virtues and personal accomplishments, a source of peculiar pride, and that feeling is not a little enhanced in me by a recollection of the country to which we are indebted for his qualifications. Indeed the mention of America

has never failed to fill me with the most lively emotions. In my earliest infancy—that tender season, when impressions the most permanent and the most powerful are likely to be excited, the story of her then recent struggle raised a throb in every heart that loved liberty, and wrung a reluctant tribute even from discomfited oppression. I saw her spurning alike the luxuries that would enervate, and the legions that would intimidate—dashing from her lips the poisoned cup of European servitude, and through all the vicissitudes of her protracted conflict, displaying a magnanimity that defied misfortune, and a moderation that ornamented victory. It was the first vision of my childhood—it will descend with me to the grave.—As a man, then, I venerate the mention of America; but, as an Irishman, I concede her claims on my affection. Never, oh! never, while she has her memory left her, can Ireland forget the home of her emigrant, and the asylum of her exile. No matter whether their sorrows spring from the errors of enthusiasm, or the realities of suffering—from fancy or infliction—from fiction or from fact—that must be reserved for the scrutiny of those whom the lapse of ages shall acquit of partiality. It is for the men of other ages to investigate and record it; but it is for the men of every age to hail the hospitality that received the shelterless, and love the feeling that befriended the unfortunate. But if America calls on our gratitude for the past, how deeply does she draw upon our interest as to the future! Who can say, that when, in its follies or its crimes, the Old World shall have interred all the pride of its power, and all the pomp of its civilization, human nature may not find its destined renovation in the New. Perhaps when the temple and

the trophy shall have mouldered into dust—when the glories of your name shall be but the legend of tradition, and the light of your discoveries only live in song—philosophy may rise again in the sky of her Franklin, and glory rekindle at the urn of her Washington. Is this the vision of romantic fancy? I appeal to history—the monumental record of national rise and national ruin. Tell me, thou revered chronicle of the grave, can the splendour of achievement, or the solidity of success, secure to empire the permanence of its possessions? Alas! Troy thought so once, yet the land of Priam lives only in song—Thebes thought so once, yet her hundred gates have crumbled, and her very tombs are but as the dust they were destined to commemorate—so thought Palmyra; where is she?—so thought the countries of Demosthenes and the Spartan; yet Leonidas is trampled by the timid slave, and Athens insulted by the mindless Ottoman! The days of their glory are as if they had never been, and the island that was then a speck, rude and neglected in the barren ocean, now rivals the wealth of their Commerce, the glory of their Arms, the fame of their Philosophy, the eloquence of their Senate, and the inspiration of their Bards! Who shall say then, contemplating the past, that England, proud and potent as she appears, may not one day be what Athens is, and the young America yet soar to be what Athens was? Haply, when the European column shall have mouldered, and the night of barbarism obscured its very ruins, that mighty Continent may emerge from the horizon, to rule for its time sovereign of the ascendant!

“Such, Sir, is the natural progress of human operations, and such the unsubstantial mockery of human pride. But I should apologize for this digression—

The tombs are at best a sad, although an instructive subject. At all events, they are ill suited to such an hour as this. I shall endeavour to atone for it, by turning to a theme which tombs cannot inurn, nor revolutions alter. It is the custom of your Board, and a noble one it is, to deck the cup of the gay with the garland of the great, and surely, even in the eyes of its deity, his grape is not less lovely when glowing beneath the foliage of the palm tree and the myrtle. Allow me to add one flower to the chaplet, which, though it sprung in America, is no exotic—virtue has planted it, and it is naturalized every where.

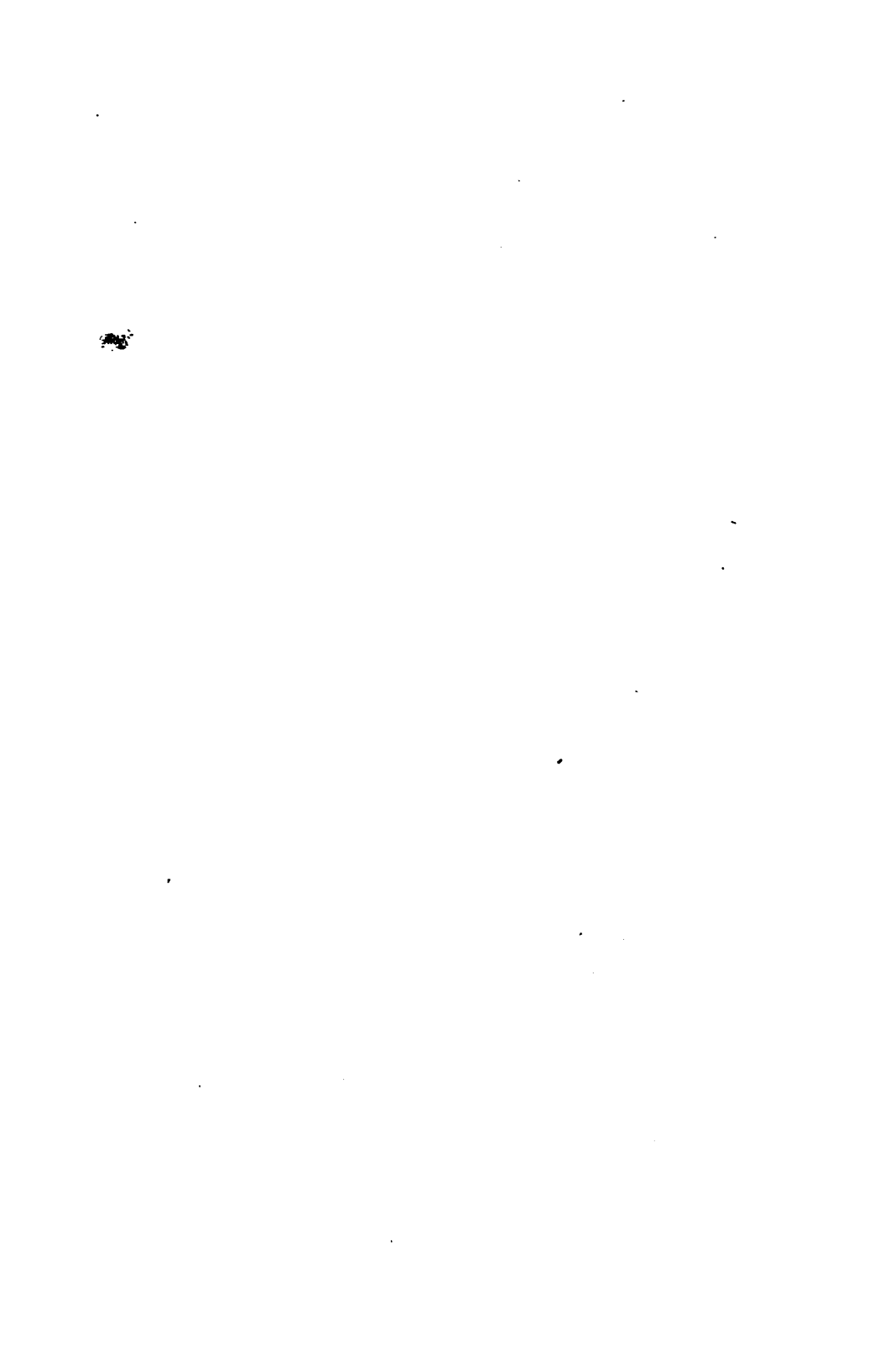
“ No matter what may be the birth-place of such a man as WASHINGTON. No climate can claim, no country can appropriate him—the boon of Providence to the human race—his fame is eternity, and his residence creation. Though it was the defeat of our arms, and the disgrace of our policy, I almost bless the convulsion in which he had his origin : if the heavens thundered and the earth rocked, yet, when the storm passed, how pure was the climate that it cleared—how bright in the brow of the firmament was the planet it revealed to us? In the production of Washington, it does really appear as if nature was endeavouring to improve upon herself, and that all the virtues of the ancient world were but so many studies preparatory to the patriot of the new. Individual instances, no doubt, there were ; splendid exemplifications of some single qualification—Cæsar was merciful, Scipio was continent, Hannibal was patient—but it was reserved for Washington to blend them all in one, and like the lovely *chef-d'œuvre* of the Grecian artist, to exhibit in one glow of associated beauty, the pride of every model, and the perfection of every master.—As a

general, he marshalled the peasant into a veteran, and supplied by discipline the absence of experience. As a statesman, he enlarged the policy of the cabinet into the most comprehensive system of general advantage; and such was the wisdom of his views, and the philosophy of his councils, that to the soldier and the statesman, he almost added the character of the sage. 'A conqueror, he was untainted with the crime of blood—a revolutionist, he was free from any stain of treason; for aggression commenced the contest, and a country called him to the command—liberty unsheathed his sword—necessity stained, victory returned it. If he had paused here, history might doubt what station to assign him; whether at the head of her citizens or her soldiers—her heroes or her patriots. But the last glorious act crowned his career, and banishes hesitation. Who, like Washington, after having freed a country, resigned her crown, and retired to a cottage rather than reign in a capitol! Immortal man! He took from the battle its crime, and from the conquest its chains—he left the victorious the glory of his self-denial, and turned upon the vanquished only the retribution of his mercy. Happy, proud America! The lightnings of heaven could not resist your sage—the temptations of earth could not corrupt your soldier! I give you, Sir,

“ THE MEMORY OF GEORGE WASHINGTON ! ”

THE END.













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